THE REPORT OF THE SEYBERT COMMISSION ON SPIRITUALISM

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PRELIMINARY REPORT

OF THE COMMISSION APPOINTED BY

THE UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

TO INVESTIGATE

MODERN SPIRITUALISM

IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUEST OF THE LATE

HENRY SEYBERT

WITH A FOREWORD BY H. H. FURNESS, JR.

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PHILADELPHIA AND LONDON
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FOREWORD

Now, at the present time, when the attention of the public is turning towards questions of Psychology and Psychiatry, it is most appropriate that a volume such as the present *Report* be again placed in the hands of the public. While it cannot be said that the conclusions reached by the Seybert Commission were final, yet material for future investigation was furnished and facts so clearly stated that the reader might form his own conclusions. The purpose and intended scope of the Commission are plainly set forth in the Preliminary sections, and therefore need not be entered upon here.

Of the members composing that Commission but one is now surviving, Dr. Calvin B. Knerr, who contributed an interesting report on the slate-writing medium, Mrs. Patterson. The sections by the Acting-Chairman, Dr. Horace Howard Furness, on Mediumistic Development, Sealed Letters, and Materialization were the occasion of acrimonious and violent attack on the whole work of the Commission by those periodicals devoted to spiritualism and its propaganda. Age cannot wither the charm of the good humoured satire with which the Acting-Chairman treated these subjects; and it was largely the spirit in which they were thus approached that inspired the intense hostility on the part of the spiritual mediums and their many followers.

It has been epigrammatically said that, Superstition is, in many cases, the cloak that keeps a man's religion from dying of cold; possibly the same may be said of Spiritualism and Psychology.

February, 1920. H. H. Furness, Jr.

PRELIMINARY REPORT

OF

The Seybert Commission for Investigating Modern Spiritualism.

To the Trustees of The University of Pennsylvania:

'THE Seybert Commission for Investigating Modern Spiritualism' respectfully present the following Preliminary Report, and request that the Commission be continued, on the following grounds:

The Commission is composed of men whose days are already filled with duties which cannot be laid aside, and who are able, therefore, to devote but a small portion of their time to these investigations. They are conscious that your honorable body look to them for a due performance of their task, and the only assurance which they can offer of their earnestness and zeal is in thus presenting to you, from time to time, such fragmentary Reports as the following, whereby they trust that successive steps in their progress may be marked. It is no small matter to be able to record any progress in a subject of so wide and deep an interest as the present. It is not too much to say that the farther our investigations extend the more imperative appears the demand for these investigations. The belief in so-called Spiritualism is certainly not decreasing. It has from the first assumed a religious tone, and now claims to be ranked among the denominational Faiths of the day.

From the outset your Commission have been deeply impressed with the seriousness of their undertaking, and have fully recognized that men eminent in intelligence and attainments yield to Spiritualism an entire credence, and who can fail to stand aside in tender reverence when crushed and bleeding hearts are seen to seek it for consolation and for hope? They beg that nothing which they may say may be interpreted as indicating indifference or levity. Wherever fraud in Spiritualism be found, that it is, and not whatever of truth there may be therein, which is denounced, and all Spiritualists who love the truth will join with us in condemnation of it.

The admission of evidence concerning the so-called Spiritual manifestations has been duly weighed. There is apparent force in the argument that our national histories are founded, accepted and trusted on evidence by no means as direct as that by which, it is claimed, the proofs of Spiritual miracles are accompanied. But it must be remembered that the facts of profane history are vouched for by evidence which is in accord with our present experience; they are in harmony with all that is now going on in the light of day (that history repeats itself has grown into a commonplace), and we are justified in accepting them on testimony, however indirect, which is nevertheless at one with the ordinary course of events. But the phenomena of Spiritualism have no such support; they are commonly regarded as in contravention of the ordinary experience of mankind (in that they are abnormal and extraordinary lies their very attractiveness to many people), and no indirect testimony concerning them can be admitted without the most thorough, the most searching scrutiny. We doubt if any thoughtful Spiritualist could be found to maintain that we should unquestioningly accept all the so-called 'facts' with which their annals teem. To sift

the evidence of merely half a dozen would require incalculable labor. Wherefore we decided that, as we shall be held responsible for our conclusions, we must form those conclusions solely on our own observations; without at all imputing untrustworthiness to the testimony of others we can really vouch only for facts which we have ourselves observed.

The late Mr. Henry Seybert during his lifetime was known as an enthusiastic believer in Modern Spiritualism, and shortly before his death presented to The University of Pennsylvania a sum of money sufficient to found a chair of Philosophy, and to the gift added a condition that the University should appoint a Commission to investigate 'all systems of Morals, Religion, or Philosophy which assume to represent the Truth, and particularly of Modern Spiritualism.'

A Commission was accordingly appointed, composed as follows: Dr. William Pepper, Dr. Joseph Leidy, Dr. George A. Koenig, Professor Robert Ellis Thompson, Professor George S. Fullerton and Dr. Horace Howard Furness; to whom were afterwards added Mr. Coleman Sellers, Dr. James W. White, Dr. Calvin B. Knerr and Dr. S. Weir Mitchell. Of this Commission Dr. Pepper, as Provost of The University, was, *ex-officio*, Chairman, Dr. Furness, Acting Chairman, and Professor Fullerton, Secretary.

As a befitting preliminary, at one of our earliest meetings each member in turn expressed his entire freedom from all prejudices against the subject to be investigated, and his readiness to accept any conclusion warranted by facts; one of our number, the Acting Chairman, so far from being unprejudiced confessed to a leaning in favor of the substantial truth of Spiritualism.

We deemed ourselves fortunate at the outset in having as a

counselor the late Mr. Thos. R. Hazard, a personal friend of Mr. Seybert, and widely known throughout the land as an uncompromising Spiritualist.

By the advice of Mr. Hazard we addressed ourselves first to the investigation of Independent Slate Writing, and through his aid a séance for this purpose was arranged with a noted Medium, Mrs. S. E. Patterson.

This mode of manifesting Spiritualistic power, as far as it has come under our observation, is, concisely stated, the writing on the concealed surface of a slate which is in contact with a Medium. In the present instance, between two slates fastened together by a hinge on one side and a screw on the other, there was placed a small fragment of slate pencil; when this fragment is bitten off by the Medium, it receives, so Mr. Hazard assured us, additional Spiritualistic power. As soon as a Spirit has finished writing its communication with the pencil on the inner surface of the slates, the completion of the task is made known by the appearance of the slate pencil on the outside, upon the slates. The slates are always held in concealment under the table, and never has this remarkable passage of the pencil through the solid substance of the slate been witnessed by any one, not even by the Medium herself, in all the years during which this wonderful phenomenon has been a matter of daily, almost hourly, experience.

Our first séance was held in the evening at the Medium's own home. The slates were screwed together with the bit of slate pencil enclosed, and held by the Medium between her open palms, in her lap, under the table. After waiting an hour and a half without the least response on the slates from the Spirits, the attempt was abandoned for that evening much to the disappointment, not only of us all, but to the chagrin of Mr. Hazard, who could not understand 'what the deuce was in it, seeing that the Medium was one of the very best in the world, and

on the preceding evening, when he was all alone with her, the messages from the spirit of Henry Seybert came thick and fast.'

No better success attended our second séance with this Medium, although we waited patiently an hour and twenty minutes, while the slates were in the Medium's lap.

By the advice of the Medium, in order to eliminate any possible antagonism, we divided our numbers, and only one or two of us at a time sat with her. On one occasion writing did appear on the slates, after the slates had been held by both hands of the Medium for a long time in concealment under the table, but to neither of the two sitters did the screw appear to be by any means as tightly fastened after the writing as before; nor did the writing of two or three illegible words seem beyond the resources of very humble legerdemain; in fact, no legerdemain was needed, after a surreptitious loosening of the screw which, considering the state of the frame of the slate, could have been readily effected.

From some cause or other the atmosphere of Philadelphia is not favorable to this mode of Spiritual manifestation. With the exception of the Medium just alluded to, not a single Professional Independent Slate Writing Medium was known to us at that time in this city, nor is there one resident here even at this present writing, as far as we know.

We were, therefore, obliged to send for one to New York. With this Medium, Dr. Henry Slade, we had a number of sittings, and, however wonderful may have been the manifestations of his Mediumship in the past, or elsewhere, we were forced to the conclusion that the character of those which passed under our observation was fraudulent throughout. There was really no need of any elaborate method of investigation; close observation was all that was required.

At the risk of appearing inconsequent by mentioning that first which in point of time came last, we must premise that

in our investigations with this Medium we early discovered the character of the writing to be twofold, and the difference between the two styles to be striking. In one case the communication written on the slate by the Spirits was general in its tone, legible in its chirography, and usually covered much of the surface of the slate, punctuation being attended to, the *i*'s dotted, and the *t*'s crossed. In the second, when the communication was in answer to a question addressed to a Spirit the writing was clumsy, rude, scarcely legible, abrupt in terms, and sometimes very vague in substance. In short, one bore the marks of deliberation and the other of haste. This difference we found to be due to the different conditions under which the communications were written. The long messages are prepared by the Medium before the séance. The short ones, answers to questions asked during the séance, are written under the table with what skill practice can confer.

With this knowledge, it is clear that the investigator has to deal with a simple question of legerdemain. The slate, with its message already written, must in some way be substituted for one which the sitter knows to be clean. The short answers must be written under trying circumstances, out of sight, under the table, with all motions of the arm or hand concealed. It is useless to attempt to limit the methods whereby these two objects may be attained. All that we can do is to describe the processes which we distinctly saw this Medium adopt.

In its simplest form (and one which any person can try with astonishing results upon an artless, unsuspicious sitter), a slate, on which, before the sitter's visit, a message has been written, is lying face downward on the table when the séance begins. There are other slates on an adjoining table within easy reach of the Medium. In order that the Medium may be brought into Spiritual relationship with the sitters, contact with the Medium is necessary, and the sitters are therefore

requested to place their hands, palms downward, in the middle of the table; on these hands the Medium places his own and the séance begins. Before long, the presence of Spiritual power becomes manifest by raps on the table, or by vibratory movements of the table, more or less violent, and by spasmodic jerkings or twitching of the Medium's arms or body. When sufficient Spiritual power has been generated, the Medium takes up the slate, and, still controlling with his left hand the hands of his sitters, places on it a minute fragment of slate pencil. No offer is made to show both sides (the prepared message is on the hidden side), the side in full view is perfectly clean, and it is on that side that the Spirits are to write with the slate pencil; there is no need of showing the other side. With his right hand the Medium holds the slate under the edge of the table, barely concealing it thereunder, and drawing it forth every few seconds to see if any writing has appeared. After waiting in vain for five or ten minutes, the Medium's patience becomes exhausted, and he reaches for another slate from the table close behind him, and, ostentatiously washing both sides of it, lays it on the table in front of him (still controlling with his left hand the hands of his sitters), and removes the pencil from the first slate to the second, and on top of the second so places the first slate that the prepared message is underneath, on the inside and next to the other slate. The trick is done. All that now remains for the Medium to do is to hold the two slates under the table for awhile, or rest them on the shoulder close to the ear of the sitter on the Medium's right, and, by scratching with the finger nail on the frame of the slate, to imitate the writing by the Spirits with the enclosed pencil. When there are two or more sitters it is only the one on the right of the Medium who is privileged to hear the writing. To apply the slate to the ear of any other would disclose the way in which the sound of the writing is counterfeited. To him,

therefore, who sits on the Medium's left, so that the Medium's hand, while holding the slates on the shoulder of the sitter on the right, is sharply outlined against the light, the motions of the Medium's fingers while the sound of writing is imitated by him may be distinctly seen.

By such elementary tricks of legerdemain as these are guileless, honest folk deceived.

Dr. Slade prefers to have only two sitters at a time, one on his right and one opposite. The fourth side of the table he prefers to have unoccupied; his manipulations of the slate can be from that side more readily observed; moreover, strange Spiritual antics may be there manifested, such as upsetting chairs which happen to be there, making slates appear above the edge of the table, etc. These manifestations are executed by the Medium's foot, which, on one occasion, was distinctly seen before it had time to get back into its slipper by one of our number, who stooped very quickly to pick up a slate which had accidentally fallen to the floor while the Spirits were trying to put it into the lap of one of the sitters.

At the first two séances an ordinary wooden table was used belonging to the hotel where Dr. Slade lodged. At the third séance a similar but larger table was used, somewhat the worse for wear, and the joints of its leaves were far from fitting close. Every crack, however, and every chink had been carefully filled up with paper to prevent, so the Medium said, 'the electricity from flowing through.'

The method of producing the long message which opened the séance has been described above. Whenever we received other long messages, written with some care and more or less filling the side of the slate, the agency employed was adroit substitution, generally effected when the Medium supposed that the attention of his sitters was engrossed with an answer just received to a question addressed to the Spirits. Prepared

slates resting against the leg of the table behind him were substituted for those which but a moment before he had ostentatiously washed on both sides and laid on the table in front of him. The handwriting of these long messages bore an unmistakable similarity to the Medium's own.

When a question is written on the slate by a sitter, equal dexterity to that used in substituting the prepared slate, or even greater, is demanded of the Medium, in reading the question and in writing the answer.

The question is written by the sitter out of sight of the Medium, to whom the slate, face downward, is handed over and a piece of pencil placed on it.

The task now before the Medium is first to secure the fragment of pencil and to hold it while the slate is surreptitiously turned over and the question read, then the slate is turned back again and the answer written.

Every step in the process we have distinctly seen. In order to seize the fragment of pencil without awakening suspicion, while holding the slate under the table, the slate is constantly brought out to see whether or not the Spirits have written an answer. By this manœuvre a double end is attained: First, it creates an atmosphere of expectation, and the sitters grow accustomed to a good deal of motion in the Medium's arm that holds the slate; and secondly, by these repeated motions the pencil (which, having been cut out from a slate pencil enclosed in wood, is square, and does not roll about awkwardly), is moved by the successive jerks toward the hand which holds the slate, and is gradually brought up to within grasping distance. The forefinger is then passed over the frame of the slate, and it and the thumb seize and hold the pencil, and under cover of some violent convulsive spasms the slate is turned over and the question read. At this point it is that the Medium shows his nerve: it is the critical instant, the only one

when his eyes are not fastened on his visitors. On one occasion, when the question was written somewhat illegibly in a back hand, with a very light stroke, and close to the upper edge of the slate, the Medium had to look at it three several times before he could make it out.

After reading the question, it may be noticed that Dr. Slade winks three or four times rapidly; this may have been partly to veil from his visitors the fact that he had been looking intently downward, and partly through mental abstraction in devising an answer. He evidently breathes freer when this crisis is past.

Convulsive spasms attend the reversing of the slate, which is then generally held between his knees; only once did we note that he placed it *on* his knees, and once we believed that he supported it by pressing it against the leg of the table. The answer is written without looking at the slate, in a coarse, large, sprawling hand, at times scarcely legible. While writing he keeps his eyes steadily fixed on his visitors, and generally rests a minute or two after it is finished. Presently the slate is held near the edge of the table and close up to it, and a tremulous motion imparted to it suggests that Spiritual power is then at work and that the writing is in progress.

Dr. Slade performed several little tricks which he imputed to Spiritual agency, but which were almost puerile in the simplicity of their legerdemain, and which have been repeated with perfect success by one of our number; such as tossing a slate pencil on and sometimes over the table from a slate held apparently under the table, or the playing of an accordion when held with one hand under the table. This Medium's fingers are unusually long and strong, and the accordion, being quite small and with only four bellows folds, can be readily manipulated with but one hand, and when under the table is held by the keys.

Two compasses, which we placed on the table during one séance, remained unaffected by Dr. Slade's presence.

At our last séance with him we noticed two slates which were not with the other slates on the small table behind him, but were on the floor resting against the leg of that table, and within easy reach of his hand as he sat at the larger table. As we had previously seen prepared slates similarly placed we kept a sharp watch on these slates. Unfortunately, it was too sharp. Dr. Slade caught the look that was directed at them. That detected glance was sufficient to prevent the Spirits from sending us the messages which they had so carefully prepared. The slates were not produced during the séance, but when it was over one of our number managed to strike them with his foot so as to displace them and reveal the writing. None of us present that day will be likely to forget the hurried way in which these slates were seized by the Medium and washed.

We think it worthy to be recorded that, in reply to a question, Dr. Slade said that Professor Zoellner watched him closely only during the first three or four sittings, but that afterwards Professor Zoellner let him do just as he pleased, fully and unreservedly submitting to all the conditions demanded by the Spirits.

We received from Dr. Slade a written expression of his satisfaction with our treatment of him, which had been throughout, so he said, entirely fair and courteous, and of his willingness at any time hereafter to sit with us again, should we desire it and his engagements permit.

It is a source of regret that, in our investigations, we have received no aid from unprofessional Mediums; and in dealing with professional Mediums we have been continually distracted by the conflicting estimates in which these Mediums

are held among the Spiritualists themselves. There are very, very few professional Mediums, as far as our experience goes, who are accepted by all Spiritualists as free from the reproach of fraud. Indeed one Medium with whom, by the advice of Mr. Hazard, we had a séance, and for whom Mr. Hazard vouched as one of the best of his class, we have seen denounced as a 'liar and a thief.' In the earnestness of our zeal we advertised in the local secular press, and in the leading Spiritualist Journals both East and West, for Independent Slate Writing Mediums, and to this wide-spread appeal there came but three replies, and of these, two were so remote that the promise of performance held out by the respondents did not, in our opinion, justify so large an outlay of money for traveling expenses as a journey across the Continent involved. This noteworthy reluctance on the part of Mediums to come before us cannot be due to any harsh or antagonistic treatment received at our hands by any Medium. All Mediums have been treated by us with uniform courtesy, and with every endeavor to acquiesce in the 'conditions' imposed or suggested by the Spirits. And yet a well-known Medium in New York, Mrs. Thayer, to whom the Acting Chairman was unknown, and with whom he was at the time having a séance, vehemently asserted that no member of the 'Seybert Commission' should ever have a séance with her, that the whole Commission, one and all, were 'old scoundrels and should never darken her doors,' etc., etc., and confessed that the foundation of her belief was the warning (sent to her by an eminent Medium whose séances the Commission had attended) that she should have nothing to do with 'the Seybert men, that they would do her no good.' Even in instances where Mediums have expressed their willingness to appear before us, we have been embarrassed by demands for compensation which we could not but deem extortionate and, practically, prohibitory;

as in the case of Mr. Keeler, the Spiritual Photographer, whose terms will be found in the Appendix, and in that of Dr. Henry Rogers, whose terms were five hundred dollars if he should be successful before us, and the half of that sum if he failed.

Although the number of Mediums whose manifestations we have been able to examine has been thus restricted, we feel ourselves justified in giving as a result of our examination of Independent Slate Writing that, whether the agency be Spiritual or Material, its mode of manifestation almost wholly precludes any satisfactory investigation.

There are not wanting eminent expounders of the Spiritualistic Faith who assert that this is as it should be, and that if in the attempt to apply the laws of the material world to Spiritual manifestations we are baffled, the fault lies in us, and not in the Mediums. If this be so, we must accept our fate and enlarge the adage that 'poets are born, not made,' and include Spiritualists.

Yet, as a rule, Mediums assert that they invite investigation. Our experience has been, as we have just said, that as soon as an investigation, worthy of the name, begins, all manifestations of Spiritualist power cease.

The bare statement of the conditions whereunder the Mediums maintain that the manifestations of Independent Slate Writing are alone possible, involves the extreme difficulty, we might almost say the impossibility, of any genuine or rational investigation. Even the very spirit of investigation, or of incredulity, seems to exercise a chilling effect and prevents a successful manifestation. Indeed Mr. Hazard once told us that the true spirit in which to approach the study of Spiritualism is 'an entire willingness to be deceived.' In Independent Slate Writing, in our experience, there is a period, of longer or shorter duration, when the slate is concealed. During this period the investigator's eye must not watch it. When the slate is held

under the table, knees and feet and clothing exert no deleterious effect, but the gaze of a human eye is fatal to all Spiritual manifestation; although to one of our number, on three occasions, a pocket mirror, carefully adjusted, unknown to the Medium, gave back the reflection of fingers, which were clearly not Spiritual, opening the slates and writing the answer.

There is really no step in the bare process of producing this writing, as we have observed it, which might not be accomplished by trickery or by legerdemain. Of course, therefore, we were sincerely anxious to disprove in these experiments the presence of those discreditable elements, not only for the credit of human nature, but for the sake of the great scientific interest involved. We are perfectly ready to accept any fact of Spiritual power; and so far from flinching from an open avowal of our belief in this revelation of a novel force in Nature, we would welcome it. But no one, not a Spiritualist, we should suppose, can demand of us that we should accept profound mysteries with our eyes tight shut, and our hands fast closed, and with every avenue to our reasoning faculties insurmountably barred. Yet this is precisely what is demanded of us by Mediums in regard to Independent Slate Writing. We must sign a dispensation to forego the exercise of common sense, and accept as 'fact' what they choose so to term. Few assertions by departed Spirits are more hacknied than, 'This is a great truth,' and yet in an honest endeavor to prove that it is a 'great truth;' and not a great lie, the sincere and earnest seeker is at every turn baffled and thwarted.

To eliminate from our investigations every element of distrust, or hostility, or suspicion, or chilling antagonism, we entrusted to Mr. Hazard's friend, Mrs. Patterson, vouched for by him as one of the very best Mediums in the country, two carefully closed and sealed slates, enclosing, of course, the required piece of slate-pencil, with the earnest entreaty that the Spirits should write

therein even if it were but the merest mark, sign, or scratch, therewith we would be content, and be ready to accept Independent Slate Writing with its train of consequences. The Medium was fully impressed with the importance of the trial, and with the fame which would thereby accrue from such a wholesale conversion as that of the united Seybert Commission.

Every Medium, it would appear, is under the special tutelage of a departed Spirit; this Spirit is termed the 'Medium's control.' In the present case, when the slates were delivered to Mrs. Patterson, her 'control,' one 'Thomas Lister,' at once promised that Spirit hands should shortly write within the sealed-up space. But no writing came that day nor the next, nor the next, although the Medium protested that every attention should be bestowed on the refractory slates. In vain was the Medium again and again adjured to put forth every power. At the end of six months the slates were received again, without any writing, according to the confession of the Medium.

So anxious, however, was our Acting Chairman that the experiment should prove successful, that, undeterred by this failure, he carefully sealed up a second slate, and placed it in the hands of the same Medium, with renewed adjurations to put forth all her Spiritualistic strength. At the end of a fortnight or more, after redoubled exertions of Mediumistic power, to which was added the combined Spiritualistic power of the Medium's entire family circle, the exciting announcement was made to us that the fragment of slate pencil within the slates could no longer be heard to rattle, and that presumably the Spirits had written a message for us.

Each Medium, generally, has some peculiar mode of manifesting Spiritualistic power; it is a peculiarity of this Medium, as has been before stated, that the completion of the Spirit message within the slates is indicated not by raps, as is frequently the case with other Mediums, but by the sudden

and marvelous appearance on the top of the slate of the little fragment of pencil, which had been securely fastened up within. The fact, therefore, that the pencil was no longer inside of our slates was presumptive evidence that the Medium's control had been true to his word, and had written us a message. The slates were received from the Medium most carefully, and a meeting of the Commission hastily called. It is scarcely worth while to enter here at length on the details of that session, of the careful scrutiny to which the slates were subjected, of the unmutilated seals, of the untouched screws, etc., etc.; but it is worth while to record the feeling of grave responsibility, almost akin to solemnity, with which we all approached what, for aught we knew, might prove to be a revelation of a power as wonderful as any with which, as yet, we had ever been brought into acquaintance. Just before we opened the slates it was noticed that at one corner, owing to the flexibility of the wooden frames, it was quite possible to stretch the slates far enough apart to permit the insertion of the blade of a knife, and an examination of the edges at this point revealed only too plainly discolored abrasions. When the slates were finally opened, not a stroke of writing nor a scratch was to be found, but at the suspected corner were the discolored marks, visible to this day, of the knife which had been inserted to extract the pencil, which, in its enforced outward passage, had left behind, in its scratches on the wood, a tell-tale trail of dust which the microscope revealed to be of the same substance as the pencil. The Spirits had not taken even the precaution to wipe the broad knife clean from rust or dirt. The slates are preserved in our sad museum of specimens of misdirected ingenuity.

We are continually confronted with statements wherein the narrator claims a Spiritual solution as the only possible one

of the enigma involved in the phenomena, as he observed them.

To all such statements we have, first, the plain and ready answer, that we do not attempt to pass judgment on manifestations which we ourselves have not observed. All that we can vouch for is the result of our own observation. More cannot be demanded of us.

Secondly, experience has shown us that with every possible desire on the part of Spiritualists to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, concerning marvelous phenomena, it is extremely difficult to do so. Be it distinctly understood that we do not for an instant impute wilful perversion of the truth. All that we mean is that, for two reasons, it is likely that the marvels of Spiritualism will be, by believers in them, incorrectly and insufficiently reported.

The first reason is to be found in the mental condition of the observer; if he be excited or deeply moved his account cannot but be affected, and essential details will surely be distorted.

For a second reason, note how hard it is to give a truthful account of any common, everyday occurrence. The difficulty is increased a hundred-fold, when what we would tell, partakes of the wonderful. Who can truthfully describe a juggler's trick? Who would hesitate to affirm that a watch, which never left the eye-sight for an instant, was broken by the juggler on an anvil; or that a handkerchief was burned before our eyes? We all know the juggler does not break the watch, and does not burn the handkerchief. We watched most closely the juggler's right hand, while the trick was done with his left. The one minute circumstance has been omitted that would have converted the trick into no-trick. It is likely to be the same in the accounts of most of the wonderful phenomena of Spiritualism.

For these two reasons, we laid down for ourselves at the start that in cases demanding close observation we would endeavor to have as many members as possible of the Commission present at every séance. In dealing with phenomena, where all ordinary methods of investigation are excluded, we perceived clearly that our best resource lay in having the largest possible number of observers.

In dismissing this subject of Independent Slate Writing, we repeat, what we think Spiritualists will generally grant, that this phenomenon can be performed by legerdemain. The burden of proof that it is not so performed rests with the Mediums. This proof the Mediums will neither offer themselves, nor permit others to obtain. Investigators, therefore, are forced to bring to bear their own powers of close observation, sharpened and educated by experience. Be it remembered that what we have here stated applies solely to the process whereby the communication is written on the slate; with the substance of the communication, whether pertinent answers to questions or dreary platitudes, we are not now dealing. Whether these answers be ascribed to Spirits, or to what is termed clairvoyance, they would be none the less true or false if delivered orally by the Medium; all that we are sure of is that the writing down of these communications, be their substance what it may, is performed in a manner so closely resembling fraud as to be indistinguishable from it. It would be a mere matter of opinion that all Independent Slate Writing is fraudulent; what is not a matter of opinion is the conviction, which we have unanimously reached as a Commission, of its non-spiritual character in every instance that has come before us.

An eminent professional juggler performed, in the presence of three of our Commission, some Independent Slate Writing far more remarkable than any which we have witnessed

with Mediums. In broad daylight, a slate perfectly clean on both sides was, with a small fragment of slate pencil, held under a leaf of a small ordinary table around which we were seated; the fingers of the juggler's right hand pressed the slate tight against the underside of the leaf, while the thumb completed the pressure, and remained in full view while clasping the leaf of the table. Our eyes never for a fraction of a second lost sight of that thumb; it never moved; and yet in a few minutes the slate was produced, covered on both sides with writing. Messages were there, and still are there, for we preserved the slate, written in French, Spanish, Dutch, Chinese, Japanese, Gujerati, and ending with 'Ich bin ein Geist, und liebe mein Lagerbier.' We were utterly baffled. For one of our number the juggler subsequently repeated the trick and revealed its every detail.

We request your honorable body to note that this Report is preliminary and that we do not consider our investigations in this department as finally closed, but hold ourselves ready to continue them whenever favorable circumstances arise.

To the subject of 'Spirit-rappings' we have devoted some time and attention, but our investigations have not been sufficiently extensive to warrant us at present in offering any positive conclusions. The difficulty attending the investigation of this mode of Spiritualistic manifestation is increased by the fact, familiar to physiologists, that sounds of varying intensity may be produced in almost any portion of the human body by voluntary muscular action. To determine the exact location of this muscular activity is at times a matter of delicacy.

What we can say, thus far, with assurance is that, in the cases which have come under our observation, the

theory of the purely physiological origin of the sounds has been sustained by the fact that the Mediums were invariably, and confessedly, cognizant of the rappings whenever they occurred, and could at once detect any spurious rappings, however exact and indistinguishable to all other ears might be the imitation. For the details of the investigation which guided us to this conclusion we refer to the Appendix.

There are among Mediums certain Specialists, whose alleged Spiritual manifestations we have endeavoured to investigate, not always successfully, as, for instance, in the case of Mr. W. M. Keeler, through whose Mediumship 'Spiritual Photographs' are produced. The 'conditions' which this Medium demanded would have made any attempt at investigation a mere waste of time, and his terms of remuneration were, in addition, as we have before mentioned, prohibitory and suggestive of unwillingness to come before the Commission. In these days of 'Composite Photography' it is worse than childish to claim a Spiritual source for results which can be obtained at any time by any tyro in the art. Mr. Keeler's letter will be found in the Appendix.

We were more successful in procuring a séance with Mr. Keeler's brother, whose Mediumship manifests itself by the materialization of a right hand behind a low screen, in front of which the Medium sits, with his face alone visible, his entire person being concealed by black muslin. The screen is stretched across a corner of a room to about the height of the back of the Medium's head, as he sits in front of it. The lights are lowered, and in a few minutes various instruments, musical and otherwise, which had been previously placed on a small table in the corner enclosed by the screen, are heard to sound, a drum is beaten, a guitar is played, etc. The music

is interspersed with flashes of hand darting and waving above the screen to the right of the Medium. The hand, when shaken, was found to be a right one. As a proof that the hand is Spiritual and not that of the Medium, the latter requests one of the visitors at the séance to sit beside him on his right, and also to be covered to the chin with the same black muslin under which all the Medium, except his head, is concealed. This visitor's bare left forearm is grasped by the Medium, as he says, with both his hands, and this pressure of the Medium's two hands on the visitor's arm is never relaxed, as the visitor readily testifies. The proof seems, therefore, conclusive that the hand which plays the instruments behind the screen is not the Medium's, and hence must be a materialized Spirit. The trick is simple and highly deceptive, as any one can prove for himself by requesting a blindfolded friend to bare the left arm to the elbow, then let the experimenter grasp this bared arm, near the wrist, with the third and fourth fingers of his left hand, closing them around it tightly, and as he does so, asking the owner of the arm to note that this is his left hand, then let the experimenter, without relaxing this hold, stretch the remaining fingers and thumb up the arm as far as he can, and while clasping it with his thumb and forefinger, remark that this second pressure comes from his other hand. The conviction is complete in the mind of the blindfolded friend that he feels the grasp of two hands, whereas only the left hand of the experimenter has grasped his arm, and the right hand is free to beat a drum or play a zither. After this test, which is patent to all, we can dismiss the theory of a Spiritual origin of the hand behind Mr. Keeler's screen. To forestall the discovery by Mr. Keeler's companion of this trick, and to prevent its detection by simply feeling with his free right hand after the suppositious hands of the Medium, which are grasping

his left forearm, a second visitor is requested to share the discomfort of the muslin envelope, and to sit on the right of the first visitor and to hold the latter's truant right hand with his left hand, while his right is exposed to view outside the curtain. Again we refer to the Appendix for the minutes of our meeting.

We had a séance also with Messrs. Rothermel and Powell, of whom the former is the Medium, the latter, acting mainly as a reservoir of psychic force, guides and directs the séance. In this case the Medium's Spiritual manifestations, as well as his material arrangements, are similar to those of Mr. Keeler, except that instead of having a visitor whose arm may be grasped, Mr. Rothermel's hands are fastened in his lap by bands of tape passed around his legs and sewed to his clothes. After the black curtain had hid the hands from our sight we were not again allowed to examine them except in the most hurried and superficial way, but, even in the brief inspection which was permitted, a glance was sufficient to show that the tape had been tampered with. The close of the séance was announced by the sound of clipping scissors, and by Mr. Rothermel's exclamation, while still concealed, that the Spirits were cutting him loose. We had no means of knowing whether the tape was cut at the beginning of the séance or not. When the muslin envelope was removed, Mr. Rothermel's hands were certainly free. The bands were cut, and we had no difficulty in believing that the hands which were dexterous enough to play the zither with very remarkable skill, under such conditions, behind the curtain, were deft enough to sever the cords.

Our séances with Mrs. Maud E. Lord were acknowledged by the Medium herself to be altogether unsatisfactory. This is much to be regretted. Mrs. Lord is one of the few professional

Mediums whose excellence is acknowledged by all Spiritualists alike, and who, in her attitude towards the Commission, displayed every desire to aid a full and complete investigation into the manifestations peculiar to her Mediumship, and furthermore, without remuneration.

In conclusion, we beg to express our regret that thus far we have not been cheered in our investigations by the discovery of a single novel fact; but, undeterred by this discouragement, we trust with your permission to continue them with what thoroughness our future opportunities may allow, and with minds as sincerely and honestly open, as heretofore, to conviction.

We desire to call especial attention to Professor Fullerton's Report in the Appendix of his interviews with Professors Fechner, Scheibner and Weber, the surviving colleagues of Professor Zoellner in his experiments with Dr. Henry Slade.

And also to an investigation of the power of Mediums to answer the questions contained in 'Sealed Envelopes.'

WILLIAM PEPPER,
JOSEPH LEIDY,
GEORGE A. KOENIG,
GEORGE S. FULLERTON,
ROBT. ELLIS THOMPSON,
HORACE HOWARD FURNESS,
COLEMAN SELLERS,
JAMES W. WHITE,
CALVIN B. KNERR,
S. WEIR MITCHELL.

University of Pennsylvania,
May, 1887.

APPENDIX.

Soon after the appointment of the Seybert Commission, I, as Secretary, was asked to make a collection of the best representative literature of Spiritualism, and to prepare for the use of the Commission a sketch of the rise, progress, present condition, doctrines and alleged phenomena of this belief, as well as an account of previous investigations, similar to the one contemplated by ourselves. For a number of months I busied myself diligently with this work, and finally read my sketch before the Commission, at a meeting at which Mr. Thomas R. Hazard, the well-known Spiritualist, was present as our guest. I had at this time seen scarcely anything of Spiritualism, but was much impressed with what I had read, and certainly in a fully receptive attitude towards phenomena supported by so much apparently strong testimony. Mr. Hazard declared himself quite satisfied with the tone of the paper, saying that he had come expecting to hear something very different, but that it was fair and unbiased. I mention these facts to show that my present opinion on the subject was not assumed at the outset, but has been arrived at gradually, and is based upon my own observations.

I have been forced to the conclusion that Spiritualism, as far at least as it has shown itself before me (and I give no opinion upon what has not fallen within my observation), presents the melancholy spectacle of gross fraud, perpetrated upon an uncritical portion of the community; that the testimony of such persons as to what they see is almost valueless, if they are habitually as inaccurate as they have been at the séances at which I have been present with them; and that there is an unwillingness on the part of Mediums to have their powers freely and thoroughly investigated—a fact which makes any investigation of Spiritualism difficult and expensive. My opinions are not based exclusively upon what I have seen and recorded in my work with my colleagues, but also upon observations made at various times in a private capacity; and there is but one conclusion to be appended to them all. I subjoin notes of séances, recorded by myself as Secretary of the Commission. Their somewhat disjointed form arises from the fact that I have not thought it desirable to make

changes in my notes, except such as were necessary in taking the Records, which are of value as evidence, out of their contextual connection with records of business meetings and matters of no interest to the public. Nothing which could be looked upon as evidence has been purposely suppressed. I have intentionally left out a description of several things which we have been unable to use, and which would have merely swelled our Records; as, for example, the account of our sealing slates for the experiments with Dr. Slade, he afterwards having refused to have anything to do with slates sealed by us. My notes were made during the séances, or as soon as possible after them. They were arranged and copied in no case later than two days after. Explanations and additions, which do not belong to the original Records, but have been inserted later, are put in brackets.

For a justification of the opinion of Spiritualism expressed above, I refer to the Records which follow.

GEO. S. FULLERTON.

March 13th, 1884.

On Thursday, March 13th, 1884, the Commission met at 508 S. 16th Street, at 8 P.M., for the examination of Mrs. S. E. Patterson, Spiritualistic Medium.

For the first test, a small piece of slate pencil was placed within a double slate, and the leaves fastened together with a screw, which passed through one wooden rim into the other. The Spirit-writing upon the slate should be indicated by the pencil appearing upon the outside of the slate. The slate was laid upon the Medium's lap for one hour and a-half without results.

Meanwhile the Medium wrote what purported to be messages from several Spirits upon slips of paper, the handwriting varying with each message. One message was signed Elias Hicks, another Lucretia Mott, another signed H. S. was compared with a message from Mr. Henry Seybert to Mr. T. R. Hazard the day before. The initials were somewhat different.

The Commission sat in a circle, the Medium at a small table with folding leaves.

One communication, signed E. H., declared that the person sitting opposite Mr. Hazard (Mr. Furness) was endowed with great Mediumistic powers.

The writing failing to appear on the slate it was opened, and Dr. Leidy, having written upon a slip of paper a question, enclosed it in the slate, which was again fastened.

After half an hour's waiting, no results being obtained, the Commission addressed some questions to the Medium and then adjourned.

The Medium described her sensations during the automatic writing as a constriction at the wrist.

She declared that she had no knowledge of what she wrote, was not distracted by noises, etc.

(Mr. Furness and Mr. Fullerton, however, noticed that she, when interrupted, glanced back over what she had previously written before continuing.)

She could not go into the trance state. Just before adjournment the Medium laid her hands upon the table and tried to produce "raps," but did not succeed.

Has been a Spiritualist for nine or ten years, but has always been possessed of unusual powers. As a child saw visions, etc.

Declares that she is most successful as a Slate Writer.

GEO. S. FULLERTON,
Secretary.

Wednesday, March 19th, 1884.

The Commision met at 508 S. 16th Street, at 8 P.M.

Present: Dr. Leidy, Professor Koenig, Mr. Furness, Mr. Fullerton and Mr. Hazard. The Medium was Mrs. S. E. Patterson.

Mr. Furness brought two new double slates, which could be fastened by a screw.

The Medium cut a small piece of slate pencil and enclosed it in a double slate (one of those brought by Mr. Furness), into which was also put a paper upon which Dr. Leidy had written a question. The slate was then fastened with a screw.

Dr. Koenig also wrote a question, which was enclosed in the other slate, the slate being screwed up by Mr. Furness.

The Medium then placed both slates upon her lap, and partially under the table. A portion of the time the upper slate was between the palms of her hands, the back of the lower hand resting on the lower slate. Then one hand was placed upon each slate, the two being placed together.

No results having been obtained after waiting twenty minutes, one of the new slates was laid aside, and the Medium's old slate, with a piece of pencil in it, laid upon the remaining new slate in the Medium's lap.

The Medium held from time to time a lead pencil in one hand, but was not moved to write.

The Medium declared that when writing appears upon the slate in her lap she feels a shock, but no other sensation.

Two Spirit Photographs were exhibited by the Medium. In one the Spirit was her own mother. The Spirit in each appeared as a white apparition behind a person seated in the foreground.

The slates remained in the lap of the Medium one hour and twenty minutes. No manifestations were produced during the evening.

The Commission adjourned to a room at the Social Art Club for conference.

The above notes of the evening's session were read by the Secretary and approved.

It was resolved to meet again on the evening of Wednesday, March 26th, for the next session.

GEO. S. FULLERTON,
Secretary.

March 26th, 1884.

The Commission met on Wednesday, March 26th, at 7.30 P.M., at 1117 Callowhill Street.

Present: Dr. Leidy, Mr. Furness, Mr. Fullerton and Mr. T. R. Hazard. The Medium was Mr. Fred. Briggs.

The Medium gave the following answers to Dr. Leidy's questions:

1. Has been a Medium since seven years of age. Now 22 years old.
2. Before seven years of age could see visions, etc., but did not communicate with Spirits.
3. Was born in Boston. Lived there when not on journeys.
4. His parents had no such powers.
5. His grandfather was a West India importer, his father had no business.
6. Educated in Middleboro and Bridgewater, Mass.
7. His family, Baptists.
8. He can communicate with Spirits best
   a. At night, or in the evening.
   b. In cold or snowy weather.
   c. In dry weather.
   d. When in a healthy condition.
9. When in communication with Spirits feels *nervous*, but cannot describe the feeling.

The Medium had on the table two single slates which could be laid upon each other. The table was about three and a-half feet square, and covered with a cloth.

The light was kept rather dim.

(The Medium explained later in the evening that writing is best produced in the dark, because dark is *negative*, light *positive*, and negative conditions are most favorable to communication.)

Mr. Furness had brought two folding slates, which could be fastened with a screw.

Dr. Leidy and Mr. Furness and the Medium each held a double slate under the table.

Mr. Fullerton asked a question as requested, but received no answer from the Spirits.

Some scratching was now heard under the table.

The Medium took the slate held by Mr. Furness (one not screwed or fastened by hinges), and it was held under the table by Mr. Furness, Mr. Hazard and Mr. Briggs.

The Medium seemed much excited, spoke rapidly, etc., and was so much overcome that he dropped the slate (one brought by Mr. Furness) which he was holding under the table with his left hand, and left it lying on the floor under the table.

At 8 o'clock Dr. Koenig came in. The slate held by the Medium, Mr. Furness and Mr. Hazard, was held in Mr. Hazard's lap, and some taps were heard. (Mr. Furness afterwards produced taps precisely similar by rubbing the side of his finger slowly along the side of the slate.)

No writing having been obtained, the Medium declared that he alone would hold the slate, as the magnetism of Mr. Furness was injurious.

Again we were invited to ask questions. Dr. Leidy asked: 'When and where did you die?' No answer.

The Medium asked Mr. Furness if his name were not Furness. (Mr. Hazard had seen the Medium before, and informed him that the Commission was coming.)

Mr. Furness now put his hand under the table on the hand of the Medium, which was pressing the double slate (not the screwed one) up against the table.

Mr. Furness declared that he heard a certain buzzing noise. The slate being taken out, there was found written on the inside of the under slate:

I will help
you all
R. Dale Owen

and something that looked like "Henry Furness is here."

The slate on the floor being examined, there was found on the *outside* (it was a screw-slate)

I am here with you
I will help you
R. Dale Owen.

Some other illegible marks were found on the slate.

Nothing was obtained on the inside of either screw-slate.

The handwriting on the two slates, purporting to be from R. Dale Owen, was much alike.

The Medium now took hold of Mr. Hazard's hand, and went into trance, personating Esther Hazard, a deceased daughter of Mr. Hazard. He (the Medium) made convulsive motions, trembled, etc., and while in this state predicted that Mr. Fullerton would receive a very pleasing letter on Saturday next—said that he should come to the Medium for advice. [No such letter was received on that date by Mr. Fullerton.]

He also declared that Dr. Koenig had brought with him a Spirit named August.

He declared Ponto, White-feather, Red Jacket and Thomas Paine to be present.

(The Medium called "White-feather" *he*, Mr. Hazard objecting that White-feather was a woman.)

The light was then turned out, and all hands laid upon the table. Mr. Furness laid one of his hands upon one of the Medium's and upon one of Mr. Hazard's. (The Medium afterwards asserted that Mr. Furness had held both his hands. But Mr. Furness was positive that he held only one.) Mr. Hazard was touched several times about the face. Mr. Furness was touched on the cheek and on his ear-trumpet and Mr. Fullerton was struck on the head by a paper thrown from the other side of the table, and touched once on the back of his left hand by what felt like human fingers.

There were no more manifestations.

The Committee adjourned to Dr. Leidy's house for conference. The above notes were read and approved.

GEO. S. FULLERTON,
Secretary.

April 8th, 1884.

On Tuesday evening, April 8th, Dr. Leidy and Mr. Furness held another séance with the Medium formerly examined, Mrs. Pat-

terson. The slates used belonged to the Medium, and were, as she told them, in daily, almost hourly use; the frame of one of them was far from sound, and the hole which admitted the screw was more than well worn. Within these slates, after being held for a long while by both hands of the Medium under the table, two or three barely legible words appeared. The screw was, by no means, as tight after the writing as before. This fact, together with the prolonged concealment, rendered it impossible to attach any real importance to the attempt to write, as far as could be made out, the name of Henry Seybert.

Under the same conditions our colleague, Mr. Sellers, produced writing for us very satisfactorily.

GEO. S. FULLERTON,
Secretary.

April 17th, 1884.

On Thursday evening, April 17th, 1884, a sitting was held by Mrs. Patterson with Dr. Koenig, Mr. Fullerton and Mr. Hazard. The Medium declared herself unwell. No results were obtained. The session was in Mrs. Patterson's room at No. 508 S. 16th Street.

GEO. S. FULLERTON,
Secretary.

May 31st, 1884.

On Saturday, May 31st, 1884, at 8 P.M., the Commission met at the house of the Provost, 1811 Spruce Street, for the purpose of sealing a slate to be left with the Medium, Mrs. Patterson, who was to try to procure independent writing upon the inside surfaces. There were present Dr. Pepper, Mr. Furness, Professor Thompson and Mr. Fullerton. Mr. Furness brought the slate and seals. The slate was the double one used in our former tests, hinged, and fastening with a screw. A small piece of pencil was enclosed in the slate, which was perfectly clean, and the slate was screwed up by Dr. Pepper. The direction of the cut in the screw-head was marked by a scratch on the wood at the end of the slate. It was nearly parallel with the long diameter of the slate. Mr. Furness then tied the slate with red tape, passing the tape longitudinally and transversely around the middle of the slates.

The first seal (red wax) was on the knot, which was over the under end of the screw. The end of the screw projected a little through the wood, but was covered by the seal. The second seal was over the ends of the tape. The head of the screw was also covered by a seal, and

three (3) additional seals were affixed on the outside edges of the slates, where they were crossed by the tape.

One of the three impressions at the edges of the slates was made by Professor Thompson's right thumb. [A test was then proposed by Professor Thompson, which the Commission does not feel at liberty to make public, as it has not yet been carried out, and publicity may interfere with its success.]

GEO. S. FULLERTON,
Secretary.

November 5th, 1884.

The Commission met at the house of Mr. Furness, 222 West Washington Square, on November 5th, 1884, at 8 P.M. There were present Dr. Wm. Pepper and Mrs. Pepper, Dr. Leidy, Dr. Koenig, Prof. Thompson, Mr. Furness, Mr. George S. Pepper, Miss Logan, Mr. Fullerton, Mr. Coleman Sellers, and the Medium, Mrs. Margaret Fox Kane, who was the guest of Mr. Furness at the time.

Those present seated themselves around an oak dining table, some eight feet by four and a-half feet and the usual height. Mrs. Kane was at one end of the table and Mr. Sellers at the other. The Medium sat with her feet partly under the table, and consequently concealed from most of those present—her feet were hidden also by her dress.

Dr. Leidy asked the question: "Is any Spirit present?"

Ans. Three raps.

Dr. Leidy: "Will you confer with the man to left of the Medium?"

Ans. Two raps. (No.)

Dr. Leidy: "To the right?"

Ans. Three raps.

Professor Thompson (who was the person indicated): "Is the Spirit male?"

Ans. Three raps.

"Will it answer to the alphabet?"

Three raps. The alphabet was called and "Henry Seybert" spelled out.

Mr. Sellers: "Will Henry Seybert make the raps at this end of the table?"

Ans. No.

"Is he satisfied with the Commission?"

Five raps were given for the alphabet; Professor Thompson called it; raps spelled out:

"I will be satisfied before the investigation is through."

Mr. Sellers: "Does Mr. Seybert know the names of the Commission?"

Ans. Three raps.

"Does he know who is now speaking?"

Three raps.

Mr. Sellers then pointed to the letters of the alphabet, which he had written in order on a sheet of paper, and raps spelled out:

CHARLES CERI.

Mrs. Kane then tried standing at some distance from the table, with her hands on the back of a chair; there were some raps seemingly near or under the Medium.

Raps were produced as members of the Committee stood with the Medium around the desk in the library, and close to a book-case. Raps were produced according to the Medium on the glass door of a book-case, upon which Mr. Sellers placed his hand. Mr. Sellers felt no vibration on the glass, but raps were heard somewhere in the vicinity.

The Committee then returned to the dining-room and the Medium wrote upon a sheet of paper the following:

"Friend Pepper: I am happy to meet you here to-night. I have not forgotten my promise to you, Henry Seybert."

The paper had to be held to the light and read from the obverse side, as the message was written from right to left.

Mr. Geo. Pepper: "Do you remember the year in which you made the promise?"

The answer given in same way was: "It was in the year in which my Spirit left the body. H. S. Call the alphabet, H. S."

Dr. Pepper called the alphabet—the sentence "Let Friend Pepper call the alphabet" was rapped out. Mr. Geo. Pepper called the alphabet: the letters HAND were rapped out, and the communication ceased.

The Medium wrote then as before: "Friend Pepper, meet me again."

It was asked whether Mr. Seybert would meet us on the next evening?

Ans. Three raps.

The Committee adjourned at 9.30 o'clock to meet again at 8 o'clock on the next evening at the same place.

GEO. S. FULLERTON.
Secretary.

The following stenographic report of the meeting of November 6th, 1884, has been read and approved by the Commission before being entered upon this book.

The few additions which were made when it was read, appear as foot notes. The report was approved as excellent.

(A Record from the notes of the Stenographer—Mr. J. I. Gilbert.)

PHILADA., November 6th, 1884.

The Committee reconvened this day, at 8 o'clock P.M., at the residence of Mr. H. H. Furness, when the investigation of the Spirit Rappings, in the presence of Mrs. Margaret Fox Kane as Medium, was resumed.

The persons present were the following:

Of the Committee—Dr. Leidy, Mr. Furness, Dr. Koenig, Mr. Fullerton, Mr. Coleman Sellers, and by invitation of the Committee, Mr. Geo. S. Pepper.

The Medium—Mrs. Kane.

The Stenographer—Mr. Gilbert.

The company promptly repaired to the dining-room, and there gathered around a common pine-wood table, consisting solely of its supports and top, which had been specially provided, in compliance with the direction of the Medium. The dimensions of the table, approximately stated, are as follows: height, three feet; length, four feet; width, two and a-half feet.

The 'Spirit Rappings' during the evening, aside from those heard during the test with the glass tumblers, were apparently confined to the floor-space in the immediate vicinity of, and directly beneath the table described—around which the company were seated in the order here stated. Mr. Sellers (to whom had been deputed the duty of eliciting the responses) occupied the chair at the end of the table more remote from the Stenographer. Next, upon Mr. Sellers' right and at the side of the table, sat Mr. Pepper, and Mr. Furness in the adjoining seat. The first chair on the side of the table to the left of Mr. Sellers was occupied by the Medium, and the remaining chair on the same side by Mr. Fullerton. At the near end of the table, Dr. Leidy and Dr. Koenig were seated. The Committee, with one exception, in accordance with a requirement imposed by the Medium, rested their hands upon the table and fixed their minds upon the subject of the rappings. The exception was Dr. Koenig, who, being seated at a distance of three feet from the table, could not conveniently comply with

the requirement. After the expiration of some twenty minutes, the Medium requested Dr. Koenig to place his hands upon the table, and he promptly complied with the request and moved his chair closer to that of Dr. Leidy, thus depriving himself of any facilities of observation of the space beneath the table.

The Stenographer was at a table about four feet from the circle of the Committee.

The lengths of the intervals between the questions addressed to the Spirits and the responses thereto, were computed by the audible second-strokes of a clock in an adjoining apartment; the periods of waiting being necessarily brief in view of the assurance of the Medium (as set forth in its proper place in the Report) that "When the raps come, they come right away."

The "Spirit Rappings" varied materially in quality and character, being at times faintly, and at other times distinctly audible.

The record of the Investigation is as follows:

Mr. Sellers: Is any Spirit present now?

Three raps—faint and partly indistinct—are almost instantly audible. The raps apparently emanate from the floor-space directly beneath, or in the immediate vicinity of the table. This remark is applicable to all the rappings during the séance at the pine table.

The Medium (interpreting the sounds): That was "Yes."

Mr. Sellers (aside): They sounded like three.

The raps are immediately repeated with more distinctness.

Mr. Sellers (aside): There are three, and they are quite distinct.

(Resuming): Is the Spirit the same one that was present last night?

Three raps, apparently identical with those last heard, are again audible.

Mr. Sellers (aside): It says it is the same Spirit.

(Resuming): I presume then it is Henry Seybert?

(No response.) Is it Henry Seybert?

Three raps—distinct and positive.

Mr. Sellers: You promised last evening to give a communication to Mr. Pepper. Are you able to communicate with him now?

Two raps—comparatively feeble.

The Medium (interpreting): One, two: that means "not now."

Mr. Sellers (repeating): "Not now."

The Medium (reflectively): But probably before he leaves.

Three raps—quickly, distinctly and instantly given.

The Medium: He said "Yes," "before he leaves." (To Mr. Sellers): You asked that question, I think?

Mr. Sellers: Yes. (Resuming): Will you communicate with him before Mr. Pepper leaves to-night?

Three raps—instantaneous, quick and vigorous. The sounds in this instance are four times repeated, the repetitions being in quick succession and apparently without variation in quality or character.

Mr. Sellers (addressing his associates): It has been very clearly shown to-night that certain sounds of greater or less volume have been produced. We have heard the sounds. We are conscious that they are raps. It is exceedingly important, in deference to the Medium herself, that we should prove that she has nothing to do with the production of the sounds other than in a Spiritualistic capacity. I would like to ask her if there is any test that she herself can propose which would be capable of satisfying us that she does not produce the sounds.

The Medium: I could name a great many tests, but they might not be satisfactory to you; for instance, the one of standing on glass tumblers, where the raps are produced on the floor.

Mr. Sellers: Will the raps be produced under such circumstances?

The Medium: I cannot say that they will be, any more than I can say that they will be produced through the use of the table. In fact, they are not so readily produced sometimes.

Mr. Sellers: I understand your position. But you say that there are cases in which, when the Medium is standing upon glass, the sounds are produced.

The Medium: Oh, yes. I mention that—the producing through glass—as one of the most difficult of tests.

Mr. Sellers: Then the sounds will be just beneath your feet, will they?

The Medium: Well, they will seem to be. They may be on the side.

After a brief interval, during which Mr. Furness absented himself to procure glass tumblers, the colloquy with the Medium was resumed.

Mr. Sellers: While we are waiting for those tumblers, will you repeat the experiment of last night, that of standing near the table and not touching it, to see if the same character of sounds then produced can be again heard? Last evening we had a very satisfactory exhibition of that.

The Medium: Yes. But we have to keep to a certain condition; that is, you are not to break. For instance, if you will all stand up and stand touching the table—all of us—until we get started, it will be some assistance.

All of the gentlemen and the Medium rise and remain standing with their hands in contact with the table.

The Medium (continuing): This is a test, something that I have not gone through with since I was a little child almost.

Mr. Sellers (after an interval of waiting): There seem to be no raps. (Another short interval.) Now, Mr. Seybert, cannot you produce some raps?

Eighty seconds here elapsed with no response, when the Medium made an observation which was partly inaudible at the Reporter's seat, the purport of which was that the Spirit communications are sometimes retarded or facilitated by a compliance by the listeners with certain conditions. Another interval of probably two minutes elapsed, when the Medium suggested to Dr. Leidy to place his hands upon the table. The suggestion was complied with.

Mr. Sellers inquires of the Medium whether a change in her position, with regard to the table, would do any good.

The Medium: I will change positions with you.

The change was made accordingly, but without result, and another period of waiting followed.

The Medium (to Dr. Leidy): Suppose you ask some questions. You may have some friend who will respond.

Dr. Leidy: Is any Spirit present whom I know, or who knows me?

After a pause of ten seconds, three light raps are heard.

Dr. Leidy: Who am I?

The Medium explains that the responses by rappings are mainly indicative only of affirmation or negation.

Dr. Leidy: Will you repeat your taps to indicate that you are present yet?

Three taps are heard.

Mr. Sellers: Those are very clearly heard.

The Medium (to Dr. Leidy): Ask if that is Mr. Seybert?

Dr. Leidy: Is Mr. Seybert present?

Three raps—very feeble.

Dr. Leidy (to Mr. Sellers): Was there an answer to that?

Mr. Sellers: There was. The answer was three raps. (After an interval, in which no response is received): There seem to be no further communications. I suggest that the test with the glass tumblers be now tried.

Upon the suggestion of the Medium, the test referred to was momentarily deferred, and Mr. Sellers made this inquiry:

It is proposed that the Medium shall stand upon tumblers. Are we likely to have any demonstration?

Three raps—promptly given, though feeble in delivery and but faintly audible.

The Medium: There were three—a kind of tardy assent.

Mr. Sellers (to the Medium): As if the Spirits might or might not communicate?

The Medium: Well, that a trial might be made.

Three raps are here again instantly heard—the characteristics of the sounds in this instance being rapidity and energy, or positiveness.

The Medium: That is a quick answer.

At this point attention is directed to the first of a series of experiments with four glass tumblers, which are placed together, with the bottoms upward, on the carpeted floor, in the centre of a vacant space. The Medium stands directly upon these, the heels of her shoes resting upon the rear tumblers and the soles upon the front tumblers. The Committee co-operate with the Medium, and, in conformity with her suggestions, all the men clasp hands and form a semi-circle in front of the Medium, the hands of the latter being grasped by the gentlemen nearest to her on either side.

Mr. Sellers (after a notification from the Medium to proceed): Is Mr. Seybert still present?

No response.

The Medium: It may be a few minutes before you will hear any rapping through these glasses.

Ten seconds elapse.

The Medium: This test is a very satisfactory one, if they do it. And they have done it a hundred times.

Five seconds elapse.

The Medium (to Mr. Furness): The glasses are not placed over marble, are they?

Mr. Furness: No; the floor is of wood.

Mr. Sellers (after another interval of waiting) informally remarked to Mr. Furness: We will wait probably for another minute to see if anything comes. As you know, the Medium claims it is impossible for her to control these things—that she is merely one who is operated through.

Another interval expires.

The Medium: That was a very faint rap. Suppose we change the position of the glasses.

Note by the Stenographer.—No intimation is given that the rap here spoken of was heard by any one other than the Medium herself. Pursuant to the request just stated, the carpet is removed and the glass tumblers are located on the bare floor at a point about five feet distant from the place at which the first test was tried. The new location is

in the centre of a passage way, about three feet in width, between a side-board on one side and a wall projection on the other. Its selection is apparently, though not specifically, dictated by the position and movements of the Medium. The Medium and the Committee resume their positions, the former standing on the glasses and the gentlemen facing her in a group.

The Medium: Now, Spirits, will you rap on the floor?

Thirty seconds here elapsed with no response, when one glass was heard to click against another, and the Medium exclaimed, "Oh."

The Medium (repeating): Will you rap on the floor?

Thirty seconds now elapse without any demonstration.

The Medium (aside): It seems to be a failure. They have done it.

Another click of the glasses, which passes without comment.

Mr. Sellers: We will have to set down the result of the experiment on glass tumblers as negative. It may be well to try it later.

The Medium (evidently reluctant to abandon the test): Suppose now, as we have gone so far, we kind of form a chain.

The company retained their positions with hands joined, and the Spirits were repeatedly requested to make their presence known—Mr. Pepper, at the suggestion of the Medium, asking the Spirit of his friend, Henry Seybert, to manifest its presence by one rap—but all efforts to elicit such response proved ineffectual. The glasses were then removed and the requests were again reiterated, but with a like negative result. The Medium finally remarked that she had rarely known of failures with the glass tumblers, but it had been a long time since she had tried them. She suggested that this branch of the investigation might be deferred until later.

The Committee acquiesced in the suggestion and returned to the pine table, where, with the Medium, they resume their original positions. The Stenographer is seated at the table in the rear of the company.

Mr. Sellers: Now we have returned to the table. Can you indicate on the table your presence, Mr. Seybert?

An interval of sixty-four seconds here followed.

The Medium: Ask some questions that would interest him in life.

As Mr. Sellers was repeating to Mr. Pepper the suggestion made by the Medium, three raps were heard.

Mr. Sellers: There is now a communication that he is present.

Mr. Pepper: Harry, would you like to know something about this investigation of Spiritual manifestations, which you had so much at heart while living?

Three raps—prompt and decided.

Mr. Sellers: Do you, Mr. Seybert, at the present time, see the persons present? Are they visible before you?

Two raps—noticeably slow.

Mr. Sellers (aside): He says "No, they are not."

The Medium (interpreting): Well, that would be too—'partially.'

Dr. Koenig: What would that mean—that he only sees some of us, or that he sees none of us entirely, but only partially?

The Medium: That he sees us, but not clearly.

Mr. Sellers: Will you please rap the number of the members of the Committee who are present at this time?

Three raps.

Mr. Sellers: Now, say how many.

Three raps.

Mr. Sellers: Are there only three?

The Medium (to Mr. Sellers): That answer was 'Yes,' I think.

Mr. Sellers: Well, you say you can do it. Please count the number of the members of the Committee who are present.

* Seven raps—very slow, deliberate and distinct.

Mr. Sellers: Are there seven members of the Committee present?

Three raps.

Mr. Sellers: Are they all seated around one table?

No response. About forty seconds elapse.

Mr. Sellers: Are they seated at two tables?

† Three raps—quite feeble.

Mr. Sellers (to his associates): We still must go back to the one thing. The information we receive through these responses is of little importance to us compared with the information which we must obtain as to whether these sounds are produced by a disembodied Spirit or by some living person; that is, in deference to the Medium. (To Mr. Furness): Do you not think so?

Mr. Furness is understood to assent.

Mr. Sellers (continuing): We have tried the glass tumblers. We have the sounds here. I would ask Mrs. Kane if it is proper for us to

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* When, in answer to Mr. Sellers' question, the raps counted the number of the Committee present, the number seven was indicated. *This counted in Mr. George S. Pepper nd the Stenographer.*—G. S. F.

† When the raps indicated that the members of the Commission sat at *two* tables, this expressly included in the number of the Commission the Stenographer, who sat at a different table from that at which the members of the Commission were seated at the time of asking the question.—G. S. F

look below the top of the table at the time the sounds are being produced, and in such a way as to see her feet.

The Medium: Yes, of course, you could do that, but it is not well to break, when you are standing, suddenly. As you know, you have to conform to the rules, else you will get no rappings.

Mr. Sellers: What are the rules?

The Medium (disconnectedly): The rules are—every test condition, that I am perfectly willing to go through, and have gone through a thousand times—at the same time, there are times when you can break the rules. So slight a thing as the disjoining of hands may break the rules. I do not think the standing on the glass has been fully tried.

Mr. Sellers: We will try that later.

Mr. Furness (to the Medium—informally): This investigation is one of great importance to us. There is no question about it—we have heard these curious sounds. Now, as to whether they come from Spirits or not—that would seem to be the very next logical step in our inquiry. I think you are entirely at one with us in every possible desire to have this phenomenon investigated.

The Medium: Oh, certainly. But I pledge myself to conform to nothing, for—as I said in Europe—I do not even say the sounds are from Spirits; and, what is more, it is utterly beyond human power to detect them. I do not say they are the Spirits of our departed friends, but I leave others to judge for themselves.

Mr. Furness: Then you have come to the conclusion that they are entirely independent of yourself.

The Medium: No, I do not know that they are entirely independent of myself.

Mr. Furness: Under what conditions can you influence them?

The response, which was partly inaudible at the Reporter's seat, was understood to be: "I cannot tell."

Mr. Furness: You say that, in the generality of cases, they are beyond your control?

The Medium: Yes.

Mr. Furness: How in the world shall we test that?

The Medium: Well, by——

Mr. Furness: By—what? Isolating you from the table?

The Medium: Yes.

Mr. Furness (applying his right hand, by her permission, to the Medium's head): Are you ever conscious of any vibration in your bones?

The Medium: No; but sometimes it causes an exhaustion, that is, under circumstances when the raps do not come freely.

Mr. Furness: The freer the raps come, the better for you?

The Medium: Yes; the freer the better—the less exhaustion.

Mr. Sellers: But do you feel now, to-night, any untoward influence operating against you?

The Medium: No, not to-night, for it takes quite a little while before we feel those things.

Mr. Furness: Do these raps always have that vibratory sound—tr-rut—tr-rut—tr-rut?

The Medium: Sometimes they vary.

Mr. Furness: As a general rule I have heard them sound so.

The Medium: Every rap has a different sound. For instance, when the Spirit of Mr. Seybert rapped, if the sound was a good one, you would have noticed that his rap was different from that of another. Every one is entirely different from another.

Mr. Furness: Do you suppose that the present conditions are such that you can throw the raps to a part of the room other than that in which you are?

The Medium: I do not pretend to do that, but I will try to do it.

Mr. Furness and Dr. Leidy station themselves in the corner of the room, diagonally, and most remote from the pine table, at which their associates remain seated, with their hands upon the table, and 'their minds intent on having the raps produced at the corner indicated,' as requested by the Medium, who also remains at the table. The Medium asks, 'Will the Spirit rap at the other side of the room,' and, after twelve seconds, and again after forty-three seconds, repeats the inquiry. No response is received. The experiment is repeated with Mr. Furness and Dr. Koenig at the corner, but with a like negative result.

At this point the attention of the Committee was again directed to the attempted production of the rappings with the Medium standing upon the glass tumblers. The lady proceeded to the space between the side-board and the wall where the last preceding test had been made, and there the tumblers were again arranged. The Medium resumed her position upon them, with Doctors Leidy and Koenig, and Messrs. Sellers and Furness facing her.

The Medium: Will the Spirit rap here?

Twenty-three seconds elapse.

Dr. Leidy: Is any Spirit present?

An interval of thirty-nine seconds here followed, when the atten-

tion of the Committee was momentarily diverted by an inquiry addressed to Mr. Furness by Mr. Sellers, viz.: Whether a glass plate of sufficient strength to bear the weight of the Medium was procurable. At this moment the Medium suddenly exclaimed: 'I heard a rap. You said, "Get a glass," and there was a rap.'*

The Medium (repeating for the information of Mr. Furness): Somebody proposed a glass and there were three raps.

Dr. Koenig inquires of the Medium whether the meaning intended to be conveyed by the sounds is that the Spirits desire to have the glass plate procured.

The Medium: I do not know. I know there were raps. (Turning to Mr. Sellers, the Medium adds): They may have been made by your heel on the floor but certainly there were sounds.

Mr. Fullerton: Then it was not the regular triple rap?

The Medium: I could not tell.

Just before calling attention to the alleged rap or raps the Medium grasped with her right hand the woodwork of the side-board as if for support. It was then that she stated she heard the sounds. They were apparently not heard by any one but the Medium.

Mr. Sellers (addressing the Spirit): Will you repeat the raps we heard just now, assuming that there were some?

Ten minutes elapse without a response.

The Medium: There is no use of my standing longer, for when they come at all they come right away.

Mr. Sellers (after scrutinizing the position of one of the feet of the Medium, remarks): The edge of the heel of the shoe rests on the back tumbler. (Assuming a stooping posture for a more prolonged scrutiny, he adds): We will see whether the raps will be produced now.

The Medium now proposes that all members of the Committee shall stand up and join hands.

Mr. Sellers and his associates accordingly stand, facing the Medium, with hands joined. Changes in their positions were made by some of the gentlemen from time to time, as suggested by the Medium, Mr. Pepper and Dr. Koenig being the first to exchange places. This occurred after a silence of thirty seconds without any response.

The Medium: Now, Mr. Seybert, if your Spirit is here, will you have the kindness—I knew Mr. Seybert well in life—to rap?

Fifteen seconds elapse.

The Medium: No, he does not seem to respond.

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* No one but the Medium heard this rap.—G. S. F.

At the suggestion of Mr. Sellers, all the gentlemen approach the Medium for the purpose of inducing some acknowledgment by the Spirit, and inquiries similar to those already stated are repeated without result. The Committee then temporarily abandon this test.

All present (except the Stenographer) having been seated at the large circular table in the centre of the room, Mr. Pepper addressed the Spirit of Mr. Seybert, as follows: 'Harry, will you communicate with me as you promised to do?'

(Three raps—given slowly and deliberately—are heard.)

Mr. Sellers: Will you communicate with Mr. Pepper by raps or by writing? (No response.) Will you communicate by raps?

The Medium (to Mr. Sellers): Well, my hand does feel like writing. Will you give me a piece of paper?—and maybe they will give me some directions.

Mr. Fullerton (to the Medium): How does your hand feel when affected in that way?

The Medium: It is a peculiar feeling, like that from taking hold of electrical instruments. I do not know but that you might possibly feel it in my hand.

The lady here extended her right hand upon the table toward Mr. Fullerton. The latter placed his left hand upon the extended hand of the Medium, and subsequently remarked that the pulsation of her wrist was a little above the ordinary rate.

The Medium, ostensibly under Spirit influence, with lead pencil in hand proceeded to write two communications from the Spirit of the late Henry Seybert. The first of these covered two pages of paper of the size of ordinary foolscap. The Medium wrote in large characters, with remarkable rapidity, and in a direction from the right to the left, or the reverse of ordinary handwriting. The writing, consequently, could be read only from the reverse side of the paper and by being held up so as to permit the gas-light to pass through it.

The communications, as deciphered by Mr. Sellers, with the aid of Mr. Fullerton and the Medium, were as follows: "You must not expect that I can satisfy you beyond all doubt in so short a time as you have yet had. I want to give you all in my power, and will do so if you will give me a chance. You must commence right in the first place or you shall all be disappointed for a much longer time. *Principiis Obsta Sero Medicina Paratum.*

Henry Seybert.

"Mend the fault in time or we will all be puzzled.

Henry Seybert."

The foregoing were understood to be directed to Mr. Pepper, in accordance with the assurance given by the Spirit that it would communicate with him.

Subsequently, when the trance condition had apparently disappeared, the Medium complied with a request to write, as it would be read to her, the Latin phrase at the end of the first communication. Using the pencil in her right hand, she transcribed slowly and in the usual direction from left to right. The style of her handwriting was small and comparatively neat. Apparently in every particular her writing in this instance was the exact opposite of that made by her while in the alleged trance condition. She here stated that, ordinarily, she wrote in the same manner in which people generally write, with her right hand and from left to right. With respect to her inability to transcribe the Latin words until these had been spelled for her, she explained that she was not at all familiar with Latin.*

A member of the Committee, commenting upon a defect in the spelling of the first of the Latin words in the Spirit communication, suggested that the error might be accounted for on the hypothesis that Mr. Seybert, in life, was accustomed to the use of poor Latin.

The Medium further explained that her understanding of the second communication was that it was a translation of the Latin contained in the first.

The glass tumblers are here again produced and the Medium takes her position upon them, with Mr. Fullerton standing next to her upon the right and Mr. Furness to the left. Mr. Sellers remains for some moments kneeling on the floor to enable himself better to hear any sounds that may be but faintly audible. The Spirits are repeatedly importuned by the Medium to produce the rappings, but no response is heard until the company is about to abandon the experiment. Three raps are then audible. The raps are very light but very distinct.

Mr. Fullerton states that he heard the raps.

Mr. Sellers: I heard a sound then, but it seemed as if it was around there. (Indicating along the wall immediately in the rear of the Medium.)

The tumblers are here moved further away from the wall and the Medium resumes her position upon them.

Mr. Sellers: Will the Spirit rap again? (No response.)

The Medium: Were any of you gentlemen acquainted with Mr. Seybert in his lifetime?

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* Mr. George S. Pepper, who was present, said that Mr. Seybert knew no Latin.—G. S. F.

Mr. Fullerton: I saw him several times before his death. If he can give an intimation now of anything he said at that time, it will indicate that he remembers it.

A very faint rap is heard.

The Medium: There is a rap. It seems to be there again. (Indicating the spot to which attention was previously called by Mr. Sellers.)

The Medium again importunes, first, 'Mr. Seybert' and next 'the Spirits' 'to rap;' and the importunities are repeated. Three raps are distinctly but faintly heard.

Mr. Sellers: I heard them. They sounded somewhat like the others, not exactly.

The Medium: I heard one rap, but it is nothing for me to hear them; I want you gentlemen to hear them.

Mr. Sellers: Probably we will hear them again.

While Mr. Sellers and Mr. Furness are conversing, several raps are heard, though less distinct than the preceding ones.

The Medium: There they are as though right under the glass. (After a silence of forty seconds): Now I hear them again very light —oh, very light.

Mr. Furness, with the permission of the Medium, places his hand upon one of her feet.

The Medium: There are raps now, strong—yes, I hear them.

Mr. Furness (to the Medium): This is the most wonderful thing of all, Mrs. Kane, I distinctly feel them in your foot. There is not a particle of motion in your foot, but there is an unusual pulsation.

Mr. Sellers here made some inquiries of the Medium, concerning the shoes now worn by her. The replies, which were not direct, are here given.

Mr. Sellers: Are those the shoes which you usually wear?

The Medium: I wear all kinds of shoes.

Mr. Sellers: Are the sounds sometimes produced in your room when you have no shoes on.

The Medium: More or less. They are produced under all circumstances.

Following the suggestion of the Medium, all present proceed through an intervening apartment to the library where the Medium selects various positions—standing upon a lounge, then upon a cushioned chair, next upon a step-ladder and finally upon the side of a book-case—but all with a like unsuccessful result, no response by rappings being heard.

Upon an intimation being given by a member of the Committee that

the Medium may be wearied, the further prosecution of the Investigation is temporarily deferred.

After the examination of Mrs. Kane, and after the Stenographer had left, the Commission held a conference, and commissioned Mr. Furness to lay before Mrs. Kane the question of continuing or closing the investigation, so far as she was concerned. If she were sanguine of more satisfactory results at another séance, the Commission was willing to prolong the investigation.

GEO. S. FULLERTON,
Secretary.

Below is given the letter from Mr. Furness, explaining why the investigation of Mrs. Kane was not continued. The decision to discontinue it came from her.

MY DEAR FULLERTON:

You remember that the members of The Seybert Commission separated last evening with the understanding that we should meet Mrs. Kane again this evening, if Mrs. Kane desired it, and that they requested me to lay the question before her for her decision.

Accordingly, I had an interview with her this morning, of which the following is as accurate an account as I can remember.

I told her that the Commission had now had two séances with her, and that the conclusion to which they had come is that the so-called raps are confined wholly to her person, whether produced by her voluntarily or involuntarily they had not attempted to decide; furthermore, that although thus satisfied in their own minds they were anxious to treat her with all possible deference and consideration, and accordingly had desired me to say to her that if she thought another séance with her would or might modify or reverse their conclusion, they held themselves ready to meet her again this evening and renew the investigation of the manifestations; at the same time I felt it my duty to add that in that case the examination would necessarily be of the most searching description.

Mrs. Kane replied that the manifestations at both séances had been of an unsatisfactory nature, so unsatisfactory that she really could not blame the Commission for arriving at their conclusion. In her present state of health she doubted whether a third meeting would prove any better than the two already held. It might be even more unsatisfactory,

and instead of removing the present belief of the Commission it might add confirmation of it. In view of these considerations, she decided not to hold another séance.

Afterward, during the forenoon (you know she has been and still is my guest), she recurred to the subject, and added that if hereafter her health improved it would give her pleasure to make a free-will offering to the Commission of a number of séances for further investigations.

I forgot to tell you, when we last met, that yesterday morning, the 6th of November, I brought away from Mrs. Patterson our sealed slate. It contains no writing, so Mrs. Patterson says. During the many months that it has been in this Medium's possession I have made to her the most urgent appeals, both in person and by letter, to fulfill her promise of causing the writing to appear in it. Her invariable excuse has been her lack of time.

I Remain Yours,

HORACE HOWARD FURNESS,

Acting Chairman.

7th November, 1884.

It will be seen from the last paragraph of tne preceding letter that the attempt to produce 'independent writing' on the inside of the slate sealed by the Commission was without result.

The slate was sealed on May 31st, 1884 (as described in the records of the meeting of that date), was placed in the hands of the Medium, Mrs. Patterson, the next day, where it remained until November 6th.

GEO. S. FULLERTON,

Secretary.

January 16th, 1885.

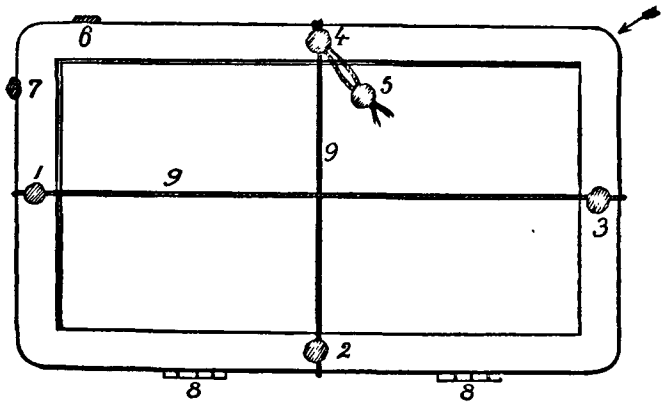
The Commission met on Friday evening, January 16th, 1885, for the purpose of examining a second slate which had been sealed by Mr. Furness and left with Mrs. Patterson, and was now returned to the Commission.

The slate was screwed and sealed by Mr. Furness, just before Christmas, and was in the hands of the Medium until January 12th.

[So importunate was the Acting Chairman in his entreaties to Mrs. Patterson to bring to bear on these slates all her Spiritual power, that at last he induced her to name a certain afternoon that should be devoted to the task. He went to her house on the day named, and sat

with her while she held the slates in her lap. To increase to the utmost all available Spiritual force, Mrs. Patterson's two daughters and her brother-in-law, Mr. Winner, were called in and shared the session. After sitting for nearly two hours, the little pencil had not made its appearance on the outside, but could still be heard rattling inside, and the obdurate Spirits were abandoned for the day.—H. H. F.]

The slate was secured as follows:



The two leaves of the slate were fastened by four screws at 1, 2, 3 and 4; one side of the slate was already secured by the hinges 8, 8; the slate had then been wrapped by the tape 9, 9, as indicated, the knot being at 4; seals had then been set over the heads of the screws, upon the tape, at 1, 2, 3 and 4, and also over the ends of the screws, upon the tape, on the other side of the slate; a seal was also placed upon the ends of the tape at 5; and two seals at one corner, at the places indicated by 6 and 7. The corner marked by the arrow (←) was protected only by the screws and seals at 3 and 4.

When the slate was shaken no sound of the rattling of the pencil was heard—a pencil-scrap having been enclosed as usual in the slate when it was sealed. The Medium had declared that the pencil was gone, but said she did not know whether there was writing on the slate or not.

The seals were first examined and declared intact.

Then Dr. Leidy pushed a thin knife-blade between the slates at the unprotected corner, marked by the arrow on the sketch.

Then Mr. Sellers pushed in a thick knife-blade a little to one side of

Dr. Leidy's. (The exact place is marked on the rim of the slate itself.) Both the blades were thrust straight in—Dr. Leidy's exactly at the corner, and Mr. Sellers's at the point marked, and neither of them was worked about between the slates.

The slates were thus separated by the thick knife-blade about one-tenth of an inch.

The seals were not broken by this.

While the slates were thus separated, it was noticed that the wood was discolored and rubbed glossy on the sides of the crack.

Mr. Sellers then removed the tape, seals and screws.

The slate being opened, no pencil was found and no pencil-marks appeared on the slate.

The rims were worn smooth and blackened at the corner where the slates could be separated; this was very distinct.

Some soap-stone dust, which Dr. Koenig identified under a microscope as the same with a remaining fragment of the pencil inserted (which Mr. Furness had preserved), was found rubbed into the same corner, showing that *the slates had been separated and the piece of pencil worked out.*

Mr. Furness then produced three slates of the same sort (with hinges, and about 8 in. by 6.) to be used in the presence of Dr. Slade.

They were screwed up with a bit of pencil inside, in the presence of the Commission. Each was marked on the inside by Mr. Sellers, with a scratch from a diamond. To Mr. Furness was delegated the work of sealing them. [As Dr. Slade, however, refused to use any of our sealed slates, our labor was wasted.]

GEO. S. FULLERTON,
Secretary.

The following is a stenographic report of a meeting of the Commission, to consider the reports offered by several members of séances with Dr. Henry Slade, who came to Philadelphia to meet the Commission. As he refused to sit with more than three of the Commission at a time, it was necessary to visit him in sections. Arrangements had been made to have all the members sit with him in turn, but it was soon decided that continuity of observation was valuable, and certain members were appointed to do the whole work.

(A record from the notes of the Stenographer, Mr. J. I. Gilbert.)

PHILADA., February 7th, 1885.

A formal session of the Seybert Committee was held to-day at 8 o'clock P.M., at the residence of Mr. Furness, No. 222 West Washington Square.

The session was devoted to consideration of the séances held with Dr. Henry Slade, from January 21st to January 28th inclusive.

The following is a compilation of written notes and verbal comments upon the séances by members of the Committee:

Mr. Coleman Sellers (referring to notes):

The Committee met on January 21st, 1885, at the Girard House, Philadelphia, in Room 24.

There were present: Messrs. Thompson, Sellers and Furness, of the Committee, and the Medium, Dr. Henry Slade.

The séance was conducted at a pine table prepared by the Medium, which was supplied with two falling leaves and stationed at a point remote from the centre of the room, and contiguous to a wall of the apartment. Upon the table were two ordinary writing slates and fragments of slate pencils.

The relative positions of the Medium and the Committee were as follows: the Medium was seated in the space between the table and the wall. Professor Thompson occupied a chair at the side of the table to the right, and Mr. Furness one at the side to the left of the Medium. Mr. Sellers was seated at the side directly opposite to the Medium.

After calling attention to the slates and the pencil pieces, the Medium remarked that, as his baggage had not come to hand, he was apprehensive that the sitting would not be a very good one. A brief, general conversation followed, and then, complying with a direction of the Medium, all present joined hands upon the table. Thereupon the Medium abruptly started back, and, remarking that he had received a very severe shock of some kind, inquired whether the gentlemen present had not experienced a like sensation. The responses were in the negative.

The Medium next proposed to give an exhibition of "Spiritism" through the agency of communications invisibly written upon the apparently blank surface of one of the slates. At this point Mr. Sellers asked that the table be examined, and, with the assent of the Medium, an examination was accordingly made by the Committee; the only noteworthy result of which was the discovery immediately

beneath the table-top of openings or slots into which the bars supporting the table leaves entered when turned to permit the lowering of the leaves.

(Mr. Sellers here continued, without reference to notes):

These slots and the use to which I ascertained they might be applied are worthy of special comment, as they played a very important part in all the expositions that were made of the Medium Slade's manifestations. The slot under the table into which the vibrating bar passed when the leaf was lowered was an inch and a-quarter in depth. At a later period of the meeting, when the opportunity was afforded, I took the slate in my hand, and, from the table side at which I was seated (the one directly opposite the Medium's position) passed it into the slot, allowing it to rest there diagonally. Upon removing my hand the slate remained suspended in its place, and in a position in which it could conveniently be written upon. I may add that this arrangement of the slate is said to be an essential feature of Slade's favorite method of writing. The Medium did not fail to notice my experiment of passing the slate into the slot, and, upon the occasion of my second attendance at the "manifestations" (which was at the third meeting of the Committee), having dispensed with the table I have described and prepared another, he somewhat ostentatiously called attention to the fact that the table then produced contained no slots such as those of which I have spoken. I have a memorandum of the size of the slots. The dimensions of the table last referred to are given in Mr. Fullerton's report.

(Mr. Sellers, referring again to his notes):

Taking a slate in his hand Slade held it beneath the table leaf to his right, when almost immediately there was a succession of faintly audible sounds such as would have been made by writing on the slate under the table. A knock indicated that the writing had ceased. The Medium then attempted to withdraw the slate, but in this encountered a seeming resistance, and only succeeded by a jerk, as if wrenching the slate from the grasp of a strong person who was below the table. Upon the slate, which was at once inspected, appeared in a fair, running handwriting, and as if written with a pencil held firmly in hand. the following:

"My friends,

Look well to the truth and learn wisdom, I am truly

James Clark."

(Continuing, without reference to notes):

This writing differed entirely, in general appearance, from the subsequent writings upon the slate, having apparently been made with the rounded point of a pencil held in an easy and natural position for writing. In other instances the writings had a strained and artificial appearance, and had evidently been made with a pencil point which had been flattened before being used.

Professor Thompson (to Mr. Sellers): Do you remember that at the session of which you now speak the Medium denied having any knowledge of James Clark, and afterwards said that he did know of him?

Mr. Sellers: I remember distinctly that he said he knew nothing of James Clark's affairs, and that, on another day, he presented a communication from a William Clark.

(Mr. Sellers here resumed his reading from notes, as follows):

The writing was obliterated from it and the slate again held under the table, when the question was asked, "Will you do more." An interval of perhaps one or two minutes elapsed when the slate was exhibited, and upon it appeared the word "Yes." The word had been written with a broad-ended pencil, and neither in style nor character resembled the first writing.

Mr. Sellers, complying with the Medium's request to write a question on the back of the slate, wrote "Do you know the persons present?" The response which was made to this was "Yes, we do."

No additional manifestations by writings were made at the first meeting. During the sitting many raps were produced on the table through some invisible agency, and as these sounds, in some instances, were such as could be made by simple means and at the command of a person sitting at the table, a member of the Committee reproduced the sounds. It was the conviction of the members of the Committee present that the sounds thus produced were similar to the sounds said to have been made by Spirits. The Medium, however, professed his ability to distinguish between the two classes of sounds, and remarked that some of the sounds heard by him were such as would be made by a person touching the table and causing it to make the raps; that such sounds were not from the Spirits; that when the raps were genuine they caused a peculiar sensation, a sort of tremor, in his breast, and, therefore, he could tell when the raps were spurious.

(Mr. Sellers, aside): In other words, that none were genuine but those made by himself.

(Resuming, from notes): The Medium, in answer to inquiries, gave

a detailed description of the remarkable phenomena said to have been produced in the presence of Professor Zoellner—which, he said, were as unexpected to himself (Slade) as they were to any one; that they were beyond his control, and evidently the work of Spirits under very favorable conditions.

Mr. Sellers here read the minutes of the meeting of January 22d, 1885, as prepared by Professor Fullerton.

(The minutes are as follows):

The Committee met on Thursday, January 22d, 1885, at 12 M., in the Girard House, Philadelphia.

Present: Messrs. Thompson, Furness, Fullerton and the Medium, Henry Slade.

A table measuring five or four and a-half by three feet, was used by the Medium. It was an oval table with two leaves. The Medium sat at one side, with Mr. Furness at the end of the table to his left, Professor Thompson at the end to his right, and Mr. Fullerton opposite. A circle was first formed by joining hands upon the table.

A slate was passed to Mr. Fullerton by the Medium, with the request that it be held by him under the table leaf to his (Mr. Fullerton's) left. The slate was held by Mr. Fullerton as requested, but at no time during the sitting was any writing produced on the slate. Toward the close of the séance the slate was held for some time under the opposite table leaf by Messrs. Furness and Fullerton.

Dr. Slade, after cleaning a slate, held it under the table-leaf to his right, in the space between himself and Professor Thompson. The slate was not held close to the table, but in a slanting position, so that a space of perhaps four or five inches was left between the edge of the slate farthest removed from the table and the table itself. A piece of pencil, broken from a small pencil—about 1-16th to 1-12th in. cross section, was laid on the slate.

A series of questions were here propounded, in each instance the inquiry being followed by a scratching sound, and the slate being then withdrawn from under the table and showing writing upon it. These writings were construed as responses.

The questions and answers were as follows:—

1. It was asked: Will the Spirits answer questions?

Ans. (as above). 'We will try.'

2. Is the gentleman opposite a Medium? (Mr. Fullerton.)

Ans. He has some power.

3. Are there more Spirits than one present?

Ans. Yes, there is,

4. Another communication which appeared on the slate was 'we will do more soon.'

5. Ques. Do you move this pencil?

Ans. We do, of course.

6. Tell us if you will play the accordion, or try to to-day?

Ans. Yes.

The accordion (a small one) was then held partly under the leaf of the table, where the slates had been. It played a little. The members of the Commission could not see it when in that position, or at least could not see the whole of it. Mr. Fullerton, by looking under Professor Thompson's arm, over the table, could occasionally catch a glimpse of it as Dr. Slade moved it to and fro, but saw only one corner.

Dr. Slade then marked a slate with a line, and laid one of the bits of pencil upon the line. A large slate pencil was then laid along the edge of the slate. The slate was placed below the edge of the table beside Dr. Slade (to his right, as usual) when the large pencil was thrown up into the air two and a-half or three feet above the table.

When the slate was brought up into view again the small bit of pencil was still in its place. This would, of course, be nothing remarkable if the Medium's finger were upon the small bit of pencil at the time of the jerk.

Another slate was held by Dr. Slade on the same side of and below the table (as far as I could judge from his arm it was nearly as low as Dr. Slade's knee), and it was suddenly broken into many pieces, the frame being at once held up for inspection by Dr. Slade. It did not seem to have been broken against the table, as there was no shock felt in the table, nor did the sound indicate it. It might have been broken by a sudden blow upon the knee, as Dr. Slade's knees were in close proximity to the place where the slate was held.

[The following are Notes of points which Mr. Sellers asked me particularly to observe.—G. S. F.]

Note 1.—The bits of pencil placed upon the slates seemed to be used in writing, for pieces with sharp edges were broken and put on the slates and afterwards were found somewhat worn.

Note 2.—They were apparently the same pieces, as the size was the same.

Note 3.—The writing did not seem to have been done by drawing the slate over a pencil at the time that the scratching was heard, for the slate was partly in view, and though it moved somewhat, it did not then move enough to make, for example, a line the whole length of the slate, as was done in one instance.

NOTE 4.—The pencil was found where the writing ended, and in the case of the line cited just above, the mark on the slate was just about as wide as the rubbed part of the pencil. The pencil was rubbed and the end had been flat.

NOTE 5.—I did not notice any difference in the fineness of the earlier and later writings. The first communication began and ended with a strong broad line.

NOTE 6.—The accordion was a small one, and I cannot say whether it might not have been played upon with one hand if grasped in the right way.

NOTE 7.—In every case, what was done was done out of our sight, Dr. Slade declaring that the object in concealing the slates, etc., was to prevent our wills from having a negative effect upon the phenomena. My own position opposite the Medium was a very bad one for observing what was going on on his side of the table.

(Mr. Sellers here read, from notes taken by himself, the minutes of the third of the series of Slade séances, as follows):

The Committee met on January 23d, 1885, at the Girard House, Philadelphia, in Room 24.

There were present: Messrs. Thompson, Sellers and Furness, of the Committee, and the Medium, Dr. Henry Slade.

The Medium was seated in the space between the table and the wall. Professor Thompson occupied a chair at the side of the table to the right, and Mr. Furness one at the side to the left of the Medium. Mr. Sellers was seated at the side directly opposite to the Medium.

The table made use of on this occasion was much larger than the one used at the first meeting. Attention was called to the fact that there were no slots under the middle leaf of the table as there were in the other table.

Between the leaf and the centre of the table paper had been introduced for the purpose of stuffing the crack, a rather large one, and the explanation of the Medium was, 'This is to stop a sort of draft that comes up through the crack and breaks the connection.' The members of the Committee were inclined to think that the purpose was to prevent them from observing through the crack any manipulations of the slate or motions by the Medium under the table.

The first writing on the slate was, 'We will do all we can.'

By request of the Medium, a slate with a bit of pencil was then held by Mr. Sellers under the table leaf next to him on his left, when the question was put, 'Will you try to write on the slate held by the gentleman opposite.' The response, 'We will try,' was written on

the Medium's slate. After taking the slate in his hand and cleanly wiping it, the Medium passed it under the table leaf, when almost instantly sounds indicating writing, such as were audible at the first session, were repeated. Upon being exhibited the slate contained the following:

My friends,—

Paul's injunction was "add to your faith knowledge." this knowledge, has encouraged the desponding, and given comfort to the mourner, and gives hope to the Hopeless. I am truly

William Clark.

The appearance of this writing was much the same as that of the first day, when another long written communication was produced, but it bore no resemblance to the scrawls which were exhibited in answer to questions.

A special minute is here made of observations by members of the Committee upon certain features of the Medium's operations, which tended to discredit the assumption of a supernatural agency in the production of the slate writings. In the above instance a slate which had been noted as standing against a leg of the table and behind the chair of the Medium, but conveniently within his reach, was dexterously substituted by the Medium for the slate taken from the table and the one upon which ostensibly writing was to appear. This was observed by one member. In another instance a member (Mr. Sellers) observed the same substitution, so far as the motion of the Medium's hand and arm was concerned. By certain private marks, adroitly applied, the same member noted the fact that the slate on which the writing was exhibited was not, as the Medium represented it to be, the same slate which had been taken from the table.

[The foregoing note by the Stenographer is somewhat incoherent, owing to his unfamiliarity with Slade's séances; yet we prefer to let it remain as it is.—G. S. F.]

(Mr. Sellers adds, parenthetically): That is, I watched the Medium s operations specially with a view of informing myself whether the slate used in both instances was the same.

(Resuming, from notes): The Medium proposed that the Committee should retain the slate upon which the long message appeared. The slate was accordingly retained by the Committee.

Professor Thompson (addressing Mr. Sellers): Was not that slate the one that I held at the time referred to?

Mr. Sellers: It was. The slate was held by you at the same time that it was held by the Medium.

Professor Thompson: Then there is an additional fact to be noted in regard to it. That fact is this. When the sounds indicating the writing process had ceased, I endeavored to pull the slate away from under the table, but the Medium resisted my effort, and by powerful exertion jerked the slate out toward himself. The substitution of one slate for the other was probably made at this time, and the slate so substituted was then placed on the table.

Mr. Sellers: That is true, most assuredly I saw the substitution, and Mr. Furness also saw it very plainly. From his position Mr. Furness saw the Medium take up the other slate.

NOTE.—An explanation was here made by Mr. Furness to the effect that his knowledge of the substitution here spoken of was inferential, but that at another period of the séance he did distinctly see the Medium grasp an unused slate.

Mr. Sellers here resumed, from his notes:

The Medium then proposed to attempt the experiment of causing the chair upon which Professor Thompson sat, to rise from the floor, without external agency other than that of the hand of the Medium on the back of the chair. In answer to the question, 'Will you try to lift the chair?' the response was 'Yes.' Mr. Sellers, being requested to write a question on the back of the slate near him, wrote the following, 'What is the time?' After some little time, during which the Medium furtively glanced at the slate, the answer was given, 'A little after twelve.'

Upon being requested to open his left hand and hold it thus extended in a position beneath the top of the table to his left, Mr. Sellers complied with the request, when a slate, which had been held by the Medium under the opposite leaf, was passed across, and, after touching Mr. Sellers's hand, fell to the floor. After several repetitions, the slate was passed into Mr. Sellers's hand, but the experiment was accompanied by a motion of the Medium which was evidently such as would have been made if the Medium had passed the slate across by his foot. [At his séances Dr. Slade wears slippers, into and out of which he can readily slip his feet.—G. S. F.]

In answer to the question, 'Are you ready to lift the gentleman?' the response, in writing, was given, 'Yes.' Clasping the back of the chair firmly with his right hand, and approaching it close enough to enable him to place his knee under the seat of the chair, the Medium, after very considerable effort, caused the chair to rise from the floor

an inch or two. The physical strain on the part of the Medium was evident.

Professor Thompson, having obtained the permission of the Medium, wrote the following upon the slate, 'Can a Spirit, still in the body, write with a slate pencil without touching the pencil?' After some delay, and frequent surreptitious glances at the slate by the Medium, the answer was, 'Yes, we can tell.' This trial not being satisfactory, the same question was repeated. The answer, which was longer delayed than the one preceding it, was, 'We can do so, if the conditions are favorable.'

Professor Thompson (interposing): Do you remember the Medium's remarks about the resistance of the Spirits?

Mr. Sellers: I do.

Professor Thompson: When he was pushing and pulling the slate, and meanwhile looking at it—while moving it backward and forward—the Medium remarked, 'There seems to be some kind of resistance; they don't seem to know what to make of it'—meaning that the Spirits were making some resistance to his moving the slate.

Mr. Sellers here resumed and completed the reading of his minutes, as follows:

The experiment attempted on the second day, of causing a slate pencil to jump from a slate without any disturbance of the slate, was here repeated. A line was drawn upon the slate, and upon this line a small bit of pencil was placed, the success of the experiment depending upon this small piece remaining immovable upon the line. After several trials this was accomplished. The experiment of playing an accordion beneath the table was next made, and in one instance the top of the instrument was thrown upon the table.

Mr. Sellers verbally made the following addition to his minutes:

The response to the question propounded by Professor Thompson was attended with more than ordinary delay. Upon hearing the response, viz.: 'We can do so if the conditions are favorable,' Professor Thompson remarked that this did not answer the question at all.

Professor Thompson: I made that statement in regard to both of the responses.

Mr. Sellers: The statement, then, was, that neither of the responses answered the question. Whereupon the Medium at once obliterated the question from the slate, and remarked, 'Well, that is the best they can do,' or something of that kind, or, 'They cannot understand that.' The fact was that the Medium did not understand the question himself, as it was purposely a somewhat involved question.

Professor Thompson: The fact appears to have been demonstrated that the Medium seemed to have no difficulty in catching the purport of questions of simple construction at a glance, and that a question of more than average length, which he could not perceive the sense of, or which was somewhat misleading in its terms, was not answered intelligently.

Professor Thompson here further explained that, when writing the question spoken of, he concealed his hand from the observation of the Medium. Mr. Sellers here imitated the motions of the body of the Medium and the position of his hands at the time—the left resting on the table, and the right hand beneath the table, near the slate—after which the writing was displayed.

Mr. Sellers next presented the minutes of the meeting of January 24th, as follows:

The Committee met on January 24th, 1885, at the Girard House, Philadelphia, in Room 24.

There were present: Dr. Leidy, Mr. H. H. Furness and Mr. Coleman Sellers, with the Medium, Dr. Henry Slade. Dr. Leidy occupied the position previously held by Professor Thompson, to the right of the Medium; Messrs. Sellers and Furness were seated as at the former sittings.

Slates were produced and held as at the previous séances. Upon one slate the following interrogatories and responses were recorded:

'Spirits, are you ready to work?' Answer: 'Soon.'

'Will you write for the gentlemen?' Answer: 'We are trying to do so.'

At this point the Medium substituted another slate for the one which he had held in his hand, and almost immediately thereafter, upon the new slate being placed under the table, the sound of writing began and was carried on with little interruption. The writing continued for a very long time, during which the Medium, removing his hand from the hands of the other gentlemen, said, 'You see that if I take my hand away from the circle and thus break the circle, the sound of the writing ceases; if I place my hand back again, the writing is repeated.' The sound of the writing, which had been temporarily suspended, recommenced when the hand of the Medium returned to its former position. The Medium further stated, by way of qualifying his statement on this point, 'If I do not jerk it away I can raise my hand a little.' He illustrated his meaning by slightly elevating his hand and withdrawing it from the other hands, at the same time calling attention to the fact that the sounds of the writing on the slate were continued.

This modification by the Medium of his original statement was regarded as intended to cover instances in which the circle had been surreptitiously broken by members of the Committee without any of the results which had been predicted. Several such breaks had been made by the writer (Mr. Sellers) unknown to any one but himself; and the Medium, finally becoming aware of this fact, observed that the circle might frequently be broken a little without any effect being apparent.

Professor Thompson: But did not the Medium make that statement at the very first séance?

Mr. Sellers: He stated that at the first séance.

(Resuming, from notes): The communication inscribed upon the slate when beneath the table was in the same handwriting as the other long communications, and was evidently written with a sharpened pencil under favorable conditions. It was as follows:

'My friends:

I have been made happy by the advent of my dear wife into this land of souls. The name of my dear wife is Ann Louisa Tiers, of Germantown. Now we shall part no more by death, as there is no death in this life.

My friends, never grieve because your friends meet the change called death, as death is but the blooming of the soul.

I am
John Tiers.'

Mr. Sellers, in reply to an inquiry by Dr. Leidy concerning the identity of the alleged author of the communication, here explained that a newspaper advertisement of even date set forth that Ann Louisa Tiers, widow of John Tiers, died on the day preceding the day of the meeting. The advertisement had been noticed by Mr. Furness, and it appeared to furnish the foundation for what had been imposed upon the Committee.

The slate used at the meeting here referred to was one which Mr. Furness saw substituted, and which the writer (Mr. Sellers) is confident was substituted.

Dr. Leidy here stated that the communication now referred to, unlike all the other communications of the Medium, which were miserable little scrawls of a few words, was a lengthy one, which covered the entire slate. He felt convinced that the slate upon which it was contained was substituted for the other one which the Medium ostensibly continued to use.

Mr. Sellers (resuming the reading of his minutes): Dr. Leidy then wrote on the slate the following question, 'Dr. Le Conte—are you engaged now in the study of Coleoptera?' The slate was then placed below the table, and, after the Medium had been observed to glance at it repeatedly, as in the case of former exhibitions of this kind, the slate was finally reproduced with this answer written upon it, "Dr. L. C. is not present.'

Then the experiment was repeated of drawing a line, laying a bit of pencil on the line and then a pencil on the edge of the slate.

The pencil on the edge of the slate was tossed violently over the table, passed over and fell on the other side of the table, while the piece of pencil on the mark was not disturbed.

Dr. Leidy: It should be borne in mind that that throw was not from under the table, because when the pencil went over, the slate appeared on the outside of the table. I sat near the Medium and saw that slate brought out as the pencil went up.

Professor Thompson: The Medium claimed that sometimes the pencil appeared on the side of the table opposite to that at which he was sitting, but no such thing occurred in our presence. Would not it be advisable, when you say it was thrown up, to add that it was thrown from the side at which the Medium was sitting?

Mr. Sellers: In each and every case.

Dr. Leidy (to Mr. Sellers): When the Medium gave you and me a slate to hold, he said the Spirits would make a communication. We held the slate away from him and there was not at any time a communication.

(Mr. Sellers here resumed, from his notes): The same experiment of jerking the pencil over the table was repeated with another pencil. Then, at the suggestion of one of the gentlemen present, the Medium repeated the experiment made at a former session, in which a long line was drawn on the slate while the slate was apparently held without any motion. The Medium then took one of the slates in his hand and placed it below the table, when it was suddenly broken. As he produced it, he called attention to the fact that the slate seemed as if broken from the top downwards. As he brought it out, the Medium turned the slate over and knocked it on his knee, and in that way crushed it to pieces. He then turned it over to show on which side the crushing took place. I saw that as plainly as I saw anything. He then used a pencil and drew a zig-zag line across the slate. The pencil was worn at one end. The same experiment, which was made when Professor Fullerton was present, was repeated, and it was noticed that

the pencil used in drawing the line was the identical one found on the slate.

Dr. Leidy: In that part of the exhibition which purported to show how, through Spiritual influence, a slate pencil might remain in contact with a slate, the Medium took care not to elevate the slate to an angle of forty-five degrees. He merely raised it to the elevation which I now indicate. If he had elevated it a little more the pencil would have fallen off.

Mr. Sellers (resuming): An accordion was then played under the manipulations of the Medium, after which that gentleman told the writer that he might look under the table and witness the performance of the instrument. The writer availed himself of this permission, but, upon his looking below the table, the musical sound ceased, and no such sounds were heard during the period in which these observations were continued. The Medium remarked, "That is unaccountable; there is no reason why you should not see it." Nevertheless, the accordion did not produce any sound while the writer was looking at it.

Professor Thompson: There is one point which was suggested at an earlier stage of the minutes, and which is, perhaps, worthy of being recorded. It is this. At the time at which the slate was passed to the hand of Mr. Sellers, under the table, the Medium compelled me to sit around in a position different from that which I had occupied, in order that, in his operations, he could move his arms and lower extremities as freely as he pleased.

Dr. Leidy: My own supposition is that, when he played the accordion freely, the Medium made use of a little wire attached to a hook or something of that kind, which he could hold by fastening it to his clothing.

Mr. Sellers: His method of manipulating the instrument was readily observable upon close attention. The accordion was a small one of the kind which is easily procurable in the market.

(Resuming, from notes): The next meeting of the Committee, which was held on January 26th, at the Girard House, was an exceedingly important one, because its result was absolutely negative. There were present, with the Medium, Professor Thompson, Mr. Furness and Mr. Sellers. Two slates were lying on the table behind him. The Medium brought forward one of these, wiped it, laid a pencil on it, and placed it under the table, but without any result. He said, "We must make a circle —that will have better effect." He laid the slate back upon the table. We then joined hands, and, after a time, thinking that there was magnetic influence enough at work, the Medium reached back and took the

second slate—not the first one—brought that forward and put it under the table. Mr. Sellers asked the Medium, "Dr. Slade, will you allow me to see that slate?" The reply was, "No, not now; the conditions are not favorable." The Medium seemed rather embarrassed, and apparently regretted his reply. He laid the second slate back upon the table, in its former position, but further back. We then again formed a circle, when he seemed to hesitate a moment as to the better course for him to pursue. He then reached back, grasped the first slate, and with a sponge washed off both of its sides, though there had been no writing upon either; and then he brought forward the second slate, with the top side upward, and washed that side, though there was no occasion for the washing, as there was no writing upon that side. Turning the slate over, he began washing the back of it without showing the face of the slate, and finally laid it down.

Mr. Furness here stated that he observed, at the time, that the face of the slate contained writing.

Professor Thompson here remarked that the Medium had evidently appreciated the fact that he had been caught.

Mr. Sellers: That fact was plainly apparent.

Mr. Fullerton here remarked that at the séance reported by him, soon after the members were seated, the Medium reached behind his (the Medium's) position to get one of the slates placed near him, and accidentally turned up one, the back of which was covered with writing, whereupon he coolly remarked, 'That is the wrong slate.' Mr. Fullerton added that he did not at the time think of connecting this accidental exposure with what the Medium was then doing, and suggested that possibly this exposure prevented Dr. Slade's use of this method at the séance reported by him, as it would seem that none of the communications produced on that occasion were of the sort produced by substitution of slates.

Mr. Sellers: The methods of this Medium's operations appear to me to be perfectly transparent, and I wish to say emphatically that I am astonished beyond expression at the confidence of this man in his ability to deceive, and at the recklessness of the risks which he assumes in his deceptions, which are practiced in the most barefaced manner. The only reason of our having any so-called 'manifestations' under the circumstances was because of the fact that the Committee had agreed in advance to be entirely passive, and to acquiesce in every condition imposed. At the meeting here spoken of, I said to Dr. Slade, 'You see that we do not attempt to exercise any deleterious influence; what we want is the truth, the simple truth, and we try to exert no influence

which would tend to impair the success of your operations.' The reply of the Medium was, 'No, I know that you do not; but sometimes the Spirits will work and sometimes they will not work.' We had no writings in any part of that sitting—everything failed.

Mr. Furness: We did not have even raps.

Mr. Sellers: We did not have even raps. There was no sound of any character; the day was absolutely fruitless of any result. Disgusted with this evident failure, the Medium decided to close the séance. He was asked, among other things, if he would write on double closed-up slates. He replied that he would not write upon them for the reason that the Spirits had forbidden him to do so; that they had said they would not write on sealed slates, because many tricks had been played on them, one of which was the writing in advance of foolish and obscene matter, which, when the slates were opened, was attributed to the Spirits. I said to him, 'Would there be any objection by the Spirits to the use of the slates if these are brought here, opened and exhibited before you prior to their being used?' He replied, 'I have been forbidden to write upon sealed slates; the Spirits tell me that if I disobey them they will not write for me any more.'

Professor Thompson: Yes, I heard that statement, that it was forbidden to bring them or to offer the sealed slates to the Spirits.

Mr. Sellers (resuming from notes): As I have stated, the result of the meeting of the 26th inst. was entirely negative. That on the 27th was the last sitting. There were then present: Dr. Pepper, Mr. Furness and Mr. Sellers—Dr. Pepper occupying the seat originally occupied by Professor Thompson, to the right of the Medium. All the manifestations that were made on that day were so similar, as far as writings and questions were concerned, to those that preceded them that it is scarcely necessary to make notes of them. Two or three rather remarkable things occurred. For instance, almost at the beginning of the sitting, Dr. Slade exhibited both sides of two slates to show that neither side contained any writing, and then placed a piece of pencil on one slate, and, covering it with the other one, held the two together between the thumb and finger of his right hand, and placed them upon Dr. Pepper's shoulder near the back of that gentleman's head. The covering of slate answered the same purpose which a table would have answered, and prevented those present from observing the operation. He frequently repeated the words, 'The Spirits will write upon the slate.' He held the slate in this position for some time, but there was no writing upon it. He then placed both slates upon the table before him, side by side. Taking in his right

hand the slate which was towards his left hand, he placed a bit of pencil upon it, held it under the table, and said, 'Will the Spirits write upon this slate?' He then added, 'I feel a sort of drawing, a something which seems to pull the slate down underneath the table. That often occurs.'

I may here remark that, at the other sittings, the same expression was made use of at times, accompanied by the thrusting of the slate some distance under the table. The statement was that the slate seemed to be drawn some distance over to the person opposite the Medium.

A sound was heard, and upon the Medium bringing the slate out from under the table, a zig-zag line appeared upon the slate with the pencil at the end of the line. The Medium remarked, 'That is something.' Then laying the slate upon the slate to his right hand, with a sponge wiped off the top of it, but did not show what was on the underside of it. He then placed his thumb beneath the slates, and turned them in such a way that the left hand, or top slate, came to be the one furthest from him as it was held behind Dr. Pepper's head. When holding it in that position for a moment, a scratching sound was heard in answer to the question, 'Will the Spirits endeavor to write on the slate thus held?' A rap followed the sound of the writing. The slates were then taken down, and the top slate taken off. Upon what had previously been the top slate was written the words, 'Yes, we will try.'

Mr. Furness (interposing): That was one of the neatest things he did.

Mr. Sellers: My habits of observation have been trained in this kind of work, and I watched the slates intently during the process.

Subsequently certain raps were audible, when the Medium called the attention of Dr. Pepper to the fact that some of the raps were made upon the chair on which the Doctor was seated. It was very evident that the raps were, in fact, made on that chair; there was no doubt about that at all.

Throughout this entire sitting the Medium complained sadly of his physical disability. He said that he was afraid that he was going to lose the power of his right side, that he was becoming numb all over. The peculiar symptoms which he described will be reported upon in the observations of Dr. Pepper, by whom they were noted.

(Mr. Furness here stated that the notes of Dr. Pepper would be read later in the evening.)

Mr. Sellers (continuing): The Medium did very little more in the way of writing. He repeated some few of the experiments previ-

ously made, such as the throwing off of the pencil. He declined to play upon the accordion, as the instrument had been broken.

At this meeting two pocket compasses, one brought by Mr. Furness and the other by Mr. Sellers, were placed at a point near the circle of the hands in order to observe whether any deflection from the magnetic course occurred. No such result was noted. No change whatsoever in the needles was observed other than that which was caused by a vibration due to shakings of the table. From time to time the Medium would call attention to one of the needles with the remark, 'There, one of those needles is moving now.' In point of fact, the needle at the time would show no motion other than that caused by the jarring of the table. The Medium went on to say that frequently, under like circumstances, when placed close together, he had seen two needles point around in opposite directions. This might have been true, in the present instance, if the Medium had placed a magnet attached to his foot at a point at which it would have been between the two needles. Its effect would have been just the one which he has described. No such result was noticeable during our observations.

A large part of the sitting was devoted to the discussion of the Zoellner experiments, the Medium narrating some of the phenomena that had been witnessed in the presence of Dr. Zoellner. He said, however, that Zoellner was a peculiarly impressible person, and one who had entire confidence in his (the Medium's) ability.

Before the conclusion of the séance, the writer (Mr. Sellers) asked the Medium if he was acquainted with the methods of operation of any conjurors. The Medium replied that he did not know many of them, but he always liked to have conjurors at his sittings, as they produced a very good influence upon him At this point the following colloquy ensued:

Mr. Sellers: Do you know a man named Kellar, who is exhibiting in this city?

Dr. Slade: I do not. I never knew him.

Mr. Sellers: You may, however, be able to explain to me a very remarkable slate-writing experiment which Kellar has performed. I will state the details of it. [Mr. Sellers here described at length Mr. Kellar's trick with the fastened slates, and in concluding, asked:] How did Mr. Kellar do that?

Dr. Slade: He is a Medium. He does that work precisely as I do it.

Mr. Sellers: But can he not do it by trickery?

Dr. Slade: No it is impossible. He is a Medium, and a powerful Medium.

(Mr. Sellers continued the reading of his transcript, as follows):

Then I described to the Medium an experiment by Kellar in lifting a table ostensibly merely by laying his hands upon it, and I detailed his explanation of how deceptions might occur, his custom of pulling up his sleeves and exhibiting his hands to the audience. I added, that he had done the same thing with a chair.

Dr. Slade: I do that thing, too. I will show you how I do it the next time. He does it as I do it. He is a Medium.

(Mr. Sellers here paused to make the following verbal explanation):

I pause here for the express purpose of having the fact noted that, being thoroughly familiar with the details of the methods of these experiments, I can positively assure the Committee that there is no Mediumistic power in Mr. Kellar, so far as his methods are concerned, that those methods are as easy of solution as are any other physical problems.

(Resuming, from notes):

The inquiry was then addressed to Dr. Slade, 'Do you know a man named Guernella who, with his wife, gave séances?' 'Yes,' he replied, 'I know him very well.' 'Well, how does he perform his wonderful exploits in rappings, etc.?' 'He is a Medium, a powerful Medium. I know him very well indeed. I can assure you that all that he does is done solely by means of his Mediumistic powers.'

I now state to the Committee that the Guernellas exhibited in Philadelphia some years ago as exposers of Spiritualism. They did not expose it, but they performed experiments which, prior to that time, were said to have been accomplished by the aid of Spirits. Guernella himself, at my house, in my presence, in broad daylight, performed all the feats and exhibited the phenomena that were produced at the dark and other séances, and he repeated them until I myself became as expert as he in performing them; for which I paid him a consideration. So much for the Mediumistic power.

(Resuming, from notes):

Before the close of this last séance, a letter was read to Dr. Slade by Mr. Furness, to which the Medium was requested to make reply at his convenience; the object was to preserve evidence of the fact that the Medium had stated that all the séances must be held under his conditions—that if the Commitee deviated in the slightest degree from the conditions imposed by him (Dr. Slade) he would 'pack up his traps and clear out.' [The letter and reply will be found annexed to this Record.]

At the end of this séance, the sum agreed upon, three hundred dol-

lars, was paid to the Medium in three one-hundred-dollar bills. He was asked to sign a receipt for that amount, but his nervousness was such as to make this a task of some difficulty. He made many attempts to grasp the pen presented to him, but his hand shrank from it. At last, by a violent effort, and conquering the emotions that overcame him, the Medium grasped the pen and wrote the receipt. The extreme trepidation of Dr. Slade was possibly due to the unexpected displacement of two covered slates which he had left standing on the floor, resting against the leg of the small table at his back, and which Mr. Furness had overturned with his foot, the result being that at least two of the members of the Committee were apprised, by the quantity of writing on one of the slates, that it was ready for immediate use.

Mr. Sellers (aside): I saw the writing on the slates. It had manifestly been prepared for use by the Medium, and up to the moment of its discovery had been carefully kept completely covered.

Mr. Furness here read to the Committee the following:

Before Dr. Slade came to Philadelphia to meet this Commission, I was told by a valued Correspondent, an eminent Spiritualist, that much of Dr. Slade's success in Spiritual manifestations would depend on the way in which he was treated, and that he should be met in a cordial, friendly spirit. As this was but natural, and as Dr. Slade's life has been passed among extraordinary scenes the world over, which makes him an entertaining companion, it gave me pleasure to extend to him what little courtesies lay in my power, asking him to dine with me during his visit, and to spend the evenings at my house, if the time hung heavy on his hands at his hotel. He dined with me several times, and I consequently saw more of him than did the other Commissioners. I told him more than once that, as a Commissioner, I should watch him with lynx eyes, and he always gave a laughing assent. I furthermore never concealed from him that he had, by no means, converted me to Spiritualism. [I last saw him in Boston, when, as I was passing along Shawmut Avenue, I caught sight of him at a window; he eagerly beckoned me to come in, and, as I settled myself in a chair, I said to him, 'Well, and how are the old Spirits coming on?' Whereupon he laughed and replied, 'Oh, pshaw! you never believed in them, did you?'—April, 1887.]

I had several séances with him in afternoons after the séances with the Commission, when I was accompanied by my mother, my sister, and by several friends; of course, only by one or two others at a time.

It would be superfluous to rehearse here at length what Mr. Sellers has set before you much better than I can, the steps to the conclusion

to which we all arrived: that the long messages were written beforehand. The difference between them and the short answers to questions asked at the séance, in the character of the handwriting, is too manifest and too obtrusively patent to be disregarded. In the long message from 'William Clark' on the slate which we have preserved and had photographed, 'Paul's injunction' is carefully included within quotation marks. The short answers to questions were scarcely legible, and at times could be deciphered only by help of the Medium himself. (This illegible handwriting is not without its use; it engrosses the attention of the sitters.)

It follows, therefore, that, if prepared slates are to be used, they must be adroitly substituted for others, which the sitters know to be clean. The question is thus narrowed to one of pure legerdemain, and the Medium must necessarily have several slates at hand.

When two slates only are used, the prepared slate is usually lying on the table when the sitters take their seats. No attention is called to it, and some little time is taken in conversation, and in the spasmodic jerking caused by 'electric currents'; in a few minutes the slate pencil is placed on the slate; no offer is made of showing both sides, which would be quite needless, since the side which is exposed is perfectly clean, and it is on that side which the Spirits are expected to write; the slate is kept almost constantly and wholly in full view and but very slightly inserted beneath the table. After an interval of waiting, during which, by constantly looking at the slate as though impatient for the writing to begin, whereby his sitters become accustomed to the appearance and disappearance of the slate, the Medium reaches for a second slate, ostentatiously washes both sides, lays it on the table, removes the pencil from the first slate to the second, and places over it the first slate with its prepared message, face downward, and the trick is done. The two slates are held for a minute under the table, and are then held to the ear or on the shoulder of the sitter on the Medium's right hand—never to any other sitter, since to do so would reveal the scratching of the Medium's finger-nail on the rim of the slate, whereby the writing of the pencil within the slates is counterfeited. I have distinctly, three or four times, watched the motion of the Medium's finger while thus scratching; as I sat facing the window the fingers which held the slate and made the fictitious writing were sharply outlined against the light. And here let me say that he who sits on the Medium's left hand, the side to which he turns almost his full back, has the best position for observation. He told me many times that he did not like to have three sitters, but much preferred only two; at the third side, when

unoccupied, wonderful manifestations occur, such as a chair's elevation, or being thrown down, or the appearance of the unsupported slate, etc. These manifestations are executed by the Medium's foot, and lest its motions under the table should be detected, the longitudinal cracks where the two table-leaves join, were carefully stuffed with paper, although, to be sure, he once explained to me the presence of this paper as necessary to keep 'the electricity from flowing through.'

Although Dr. Slade had agreed verbally in New York that the last séance of the series should be in the presence of all the Commission, he flatly refused, when in Philadelphia, to hold any in the presence of more than three at a time.

On one occasion, when the Medium was very sure of his sitters, he placed the prepared slate, face downwards, on the table, with his fingers resting on the upper surface, then in a few minutes the slate was lifted up and the writing displayed, as though just made by Spiritual agency. Generally, however, when the writing is thus exhibited, it is in answer to a spoken question, and the reply is written by the Medium in his lap and the slate turned over before it is placed on the table. Manifestly it cannot occur as an answer to a written question, unless the written question is exposed on the upper side of the slate.

How the scratching of the slate pencil is produced when the slate is lying on the table (I have been told that the sound is heard then) I cannot possibly explain, for the plain reason that I am too deaf to hear it, and I was, therefore, never on the watch for anything unusual. (Nor did I ever hear the sound of writing when the slate was held on the shoulder of my opposite neighbor, but I could see, and I knew what was going on, for the slate had once been placed on my own shoulder.)

When three slates are used, the third, and prepared, slate, is either on the little table behind him or on the floor resting against the supports of this little table. In either case he seizes the opportunity when his sitters are engrossed with an answer just given to a question, to substitute one of the slates which he has been using, and which he has just before ostentatiously washed on both sides, for the prepared slate. This I have distinctly seen him do twice, and once when I had arisen from my seat to read an answer on the slate, held by Mr. Sellers, I noticed when I resumed my seat that a certain slate which I had been watching was gone from where it had been resting against the leg of the little table, and we then immediately had the long message between closed slates. [This was the 'inferential' substitution referred to on page 59 of this Appendix.] The slate which we have preserved and had photographed I saw him take from the table at his back.

Next, as to his answers to questions. I became so familiar with his methods in this department that I could have told at almost any instant what he was doing.

After the question has been written the slate is handed to him face downward. A piece of pencil is then placed on the slate near the edge of the slate farthest from the Medium's hand as it holds the slate; of course, as the writing is to be done under cover of the table, and as the Medium's hand or wrist is supposed to be always visible, the pencil must be far under the table. The awkwardness, therefore, must be overcome of having to reach or grope after it before the slate can be turned over, which it must be in order to enable the Medium to read the question on the under side. This difficulty is surmounted by constantly bringing out the slate and looking at it to see if any answer has appeared. By this manœuvre a double end is attained; first, it creates an atmosphere of expectation, and the sitters grow accustomed to a good deal of motion in the arm that holds the slate; and secondly, by constantly moving the slate the fragment of pencil (which, be it noted, having been extracted from those slate pencils which are enclosed in wood, like lead pencils, is square in shape and remains stationary on the spot to which it is moved), this pencil, I repeat, is moved up to the side of the slate within reach of a thumb and finger; when this is done, it is dexterously seized by the Medium, who is in turn at that instant seized by violent 'electric shocks,' under cover of which the slate is turned and generally placed between his knees, only once I think did he rest it *on* his knee, and once I think he pressed it against the table; then he reads the question. And here he shows his nerve. It is the critical instant of the sitting, it is the only instant when his eyes are not fastened on his sitters, and I confess that his coolness won my admiration. On one occasion, when the question was written in a back-hand with a very light stroke and close to the upper edge of the slate, he looked at it three several times before he could read it. Moreover, it was a question out of the common, relating to the species of a hawk and not to a Spirit, and required an intelligent and definite answer. The hastiness of his reading may be inferred by the frequency with which merely the initials of the Spirit friend are given in the answer. After reading the question, I noticed that Dr. Slade winks rapidly three or four times in a sort of mental abstraction, I suppose, while thinking out an answer, but he always breathes freer when this crisis is passed, and the violent convulsions are over, which attend his hurried writing and the re-turning of the slate. His eyes can now be fixed in turn on each of his sitters, and he can rest a minute or two. (One one occasion I

saw the slate as he held it between his index and second finger, his index-finger and thumb held the slate pencil.) Presently, the slate is held near to the edge of the table, and a tremulous motion is given to it as though the writing were then going on.

On one occasion, when I knew he was about to use the prepared slate (Professor Thompson will remember what I am about to relate), I suggested that we should use a perfectly fresh pencil, so that we could be sure that that very pencil had done the writing. I was very curious to know how he would evade the test. The slate was held close to the under side of the table (the new pencil debarred him from using the double slate); when the writing was finished the slate was slapped violently against the table, and was drawn from underneath it—apparently with very great difficulty, and almost perpendicularly—and the little pencil, of course, slipped off, and in the excitement of reading the message from the 'Summer-land,' who would think of looking for the pencil? It was so clever I wanted to applaud him on the spot.

The other tricks, such as tossing the pencil from the slate and playing the accordion, can be perfectly explained and repeated by Mr. Sellers. Dr. Slade's fingers are unusually long and strong, and the accordion, which has but four bellows-folds, can be readily manipulated with one hand.

At our last séance I noticed what were evidently two prepared slates resting against the support of the table behind him, where his prepared slates usually stood. I inferred that he would like to have some extraordinary slate writing on this occasion, and, therefore, kept a sharp watch on these slates. Unfortunately it was too sharp, for one second the Medium saw me looking at them. It was enough. That detected look prevented the revelation of those elaborate Spirit messages. But when the séance was over and he was signing the receipt for his money, I passed round behind his chair and pushed these slates with my foot so as to make them fall over, whereupon the writing on one of them was distinctly revealed.

I think Dr. Pepper and Mr. Sellers will recall how the Medium instantly pushed his chair back until it was fairly over the slates and then snatched them up, and in the most hurried manner washed them both while turning his back to us.

Two compasses, which we placed on the table during our séance, remained unaffected by the Medium's presence.

During one sitting, when the Spirits conveyed the slates from the Medium's hand under the table to the hand of the opposite sitter, the

latter failed twice to grasp the slate in time, and it fell to the floor with a crash. Each time it behoved me to pick up the slate (both the other sitters were women), but the second time I stooped with the greatest alacrity and looked not at the slate but at the Medium's foot, which I saw just entering his slipper, into which it most hastily settled.

I think Dr. Slade's personal appearance noteworthy, and shall endeavor to obtain a photograph of him for preservation in our Records. He is probably six feet in height, with a figure of unusual symmetry, his hands are large but shapely, the nail of the second finger of his right hand is rather longer than the others, and appeared in the centre to be slightly split and worn. His face would, I think, attract notice anywhere for its uncommon beauty. He has a small, curling, dark moustache, and short, crisp, iron-grey hair, of a texture exceeding in fineness any that I have ever seen on a man's head. His eyes are dark, and the circles around them very dark, but their expression is painful. I could not divest myself of the feeling that it was that of a hunted animal or of a haunted man. The color on his cheeks is very bright, but it is said to be artificial. He complained bitterly of ill-health and of water around his heart, which he said at times he could hear and feel "swashing about."

A noteworthy man in every aspect.

Mr. Furness then read to the Committee the following:

Memorandum by Dr. Wm. Pepper of an interview with Dr. Slade on the morning of the 27th January, with Mr. Furness and Mr. Sellers.

1811 Spruce Street, Philadelphia.

He complained immediately and very frequently of his right side, saying it felt weak and numb, and he was sure he was going to be paralyzed. Careful observation showed that the right side was fully developed, the color of the right hand normal and the same as that of the left, and that the right arm, foot and leg were unusually supple and moveable. During the sitting I saw him deliberately kick my chair three (3) times with the side of his right foot, while attracting my attention to the scraping noises of the slate he was holding to my left ear; and again, when soft raps were heard and felt under the table, just beneath one of my hands, and at about the distance from him to which his leg would reach, I saw distinct movements of rotation of his thigh, as though he were producing these sounds by the ball of the toe striking under the table at that point.

February 6th, 1885.

Mr. Sellers offered the following resolution, which was adopted unanimously:

Resolved, That the reports of the Slade séances held in Philadelphia, as described by Messrs. Fullerton, Furness, Pepper and Sellers, are in accordance with the observations of each of the members of the Commission who were present.

After a short Business Meeting the Commission adjourned.

GEO. S. FULLERTON,
Secretary.

The following corrrespondence explains itself:

PHILADELPHIA, January 26th, 1885.

DEAR DR. SLADE:—I think you need no assurance that the Seybert Investigating Committee have been anxious to deal with you in the fairest spirit of impartial, unbiased, scientific investigation, and I think you will bear witness to their uniformly considerate courtesy throughout our intercourse.

You know how very deaf I am, and do not therefore need to be reminded that one should trust scarcely more to what a deaf man hears than to what a blind man sees.

Wherefore, I want you, for my sake, and that the Committee may feel sure of their ground, to confirm in writing what you have more than once said to me, namely, that the Committee must conform to the conditions which the Spirits impose; that you cannot consent to submit to any tests, and that rather than do so you will return at once to New York; that we must accept the manifestations as given by the Spirits; and that, since these manifestations are the result of a gradual growth, it is impossible, in the space of six séances, to repeat or to verify Professor Zoellner's experiments; and, lastly, that, if on your return to New York, the Spirits so authorize it, you will be willing, if desired, to make arrangements for another series of séances with us of a higher order of manifestations.

I remain respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

HORACE HOWARD FURNESS,
Acting Chairman Seybert Commission.

No. 11 E. 13th Street, N. Y., February 4th, 1885.

DEAR MR. FURNESS:—I take this opportunity to express to you, and through you to the other members of the Seybert Commission, my hearty approval of the course pursued by them in their investigation of phenomena occurring in my presence. Fully realizing that I am only the instrument or channel through which these manifestations are produced, it would be presumption on my part to undertake to lay down a line to be followed by the unseen intelligences, whose servant I am. Hence, I did say their conditions must be acceded to or I would return to New York. That they did so, is evident to my mind from the results obtained, which I regard as a necessary preliminary to a continuation, when other experiments may be introduced with better prospects of success. It may be well not to insist on following the exact course pursued by Professor Zoellner, but leave it open to original or impromptu suggestions that may be adopted without previous consideration, which, if successful, would be of equal value as evidence of its genuineness, at the same time give greater breadth to the experiments. In conclusion, allow me to say that in the event of the Committee desiring to continue these experiments through another series of sittings with me, it will give me pleasure to enter into arrangements for that purpose.

Very truly yours,

HENRY SLADE.

Febuary 13th, 1885.

On February 13th, 1885, Mr. Furness, Professor Thompson and Mr. Fullerton, on the part of the Commission, met Mr. Harry Kellar, a professional conjurer, at Egyptian Hall.

The men seated themselves at a common pine table, 5 ft. x 3 ft., with leaves.

Mr. Kellar sat at one side of the table, Mr. Furness at one end to his left, Professor Thompson at one corner to Mr. Furness's left, and Mr. Fullerton opposite Mr. Kellar. The end of the table to Mr. Kellar's right was unoccupied.

Nine slates were found lying on a small stand about six feet from the table.

These slates were washed one by one on the stand, and laid in a pile on the table at Mr. Kellar's right.

A slate was taken from the pile, both sides washed, another slate placed upon it, and both held together under the edge of the table. A long communication appeared upon one of them (or what seemed to be one of them), purporting to come from the Spirits.

Two more slates were taken and apparently both sides washed. One was placed on the other and both laid upon the table in front of Professor Thompson, one end of the slates being held by him and the other by Mr. Kellar. When the upper slate was removed the under side of it was covered with writing.

Professor Thompson then changed his position to that which he held when with Dr. Slade—to the end of the table opposite Mr. Furness, and to Mr. Kellar's right.

Writing was produced in similar manner on two other slates without the Committee detecting the manner in which it was produced.

One of these slates was covered on both sides with the following messages: On voyage tout éveillé dans le royaume des rêves et des illusions; l'esprit se refuse à admettre les merveilles executées dans une salle éclairé devant un public incrédule qui cherche à s'expliquer les trucs employés à deviner les—

Kellar huye del espiritismo porque ya pasó la época de ella, y solo dá el ejercicio carácter de prestidigitacion.

Het blyfft onbegrypelyk hoe de heer Kellar die door twee personen uit het publiek stevigwordt vast gebonden, zich in een oogwenk wist los te maken

[Here follow, in eight lines, sentences for which we have no types, in Chinese, Japanese, Arabic, and Gujerati. This remarkable feat closes with the following in German script:] Ich bin ein Geist und ich liebe mein Lagerbier—Hans Schneider.

Von Moltke.

One slate was broken in a similar way to that broken by Dr. Slade.

Professor Thompson was asked to write a question, which he did while the side of the slate on which he wrote was turned away from Mr. Kellar. The slate was not turned over, the written question remaining on the under side, and it was held at the usual place under the table, Mr. Kellar's thumb remaining above the table in full view, while the fingers held the slate up under the table.

A moment after the placing of the slate under the table, it was withdrawn to admit of a small pencil being placed upon it, Mr. Furness having remarked the absence of the pencil.

The slate was not otherwise withdrawn from under the table above

two inches until its final withdrawal, and the question was always, seemingly, on the under side.

When the slate was brought out a communication was found upon it in answer to Professor Thompson's question.

The answer was on the upper side of the slate. [April, 1887: Mr. Kellar afterwards revealed his methods to our colleague, Mr. Furness.]

GEO. S. FULLERTON,
Secretary.

February 19th, 1885.

The Commission met on Thursday, February 19th, 1885, at 8 P.M., at the house of Mr. Furness, to attend a séance in the presence of Mrs. Maud E. Lord.

All of the Commission were present, and there were present also, at the request of the Medium, several friends of members of the Commission, both men and women.

There were in all eighteen persons present beside the Medium; these seated themselves, as directed by the Medium, in a circle, which was about six or seven feet in diameter; the Medium took her seat in the centre.

The lights having been put out, the Medium drew her chair to one side of the circle, placing her feet in contact with those of one of the persons in the circle. Those composing the circle linked hands, while the Medium had her hands free.

The Medium described a number of Spirit forms as coming to those present—to one a little child, to another an old man with white hair, etc. The descriptions were in general vague and indefinite, and might have applied to many persons. Nevertheless, they were in very many cases wide of the mark. Sometimes a father, a mother, or other relation was described as present. In some cases the death of such relations was acknowledged by the person to whom the Medium addressed herself, but in other cases the relation in question had not died, or, as in the case of a child or brother—had not existed. To give an instance of the Medium's inaccuracy: Mr. Fullerton's grandfather was described as coming to him, and the Medium, describing the form, added that Mr. Fullerton was not familiar with it, as his grandfather had died while he was a young man, and had had but little intercourse with him. Both Mr. Fullerton's grandfathers died some years before he was born. Many other descriptions were quite as erroneous.

Sometimes a form was described as coming to one person in the circle and not being recognized by that one, was referred to the next; described as standing between them, etc. The number of successes, compared with the number of failures, was not striking.

Whispers were heard—*one at a time*—always at a point in the circle at a distance from that at which the Medium was just after the whisper heard to speak to some one in her natural voice. The whispers *were never simultaneous* with the remark afterward made by the Medium.

In the short interval between the whisper and the succeeding remark by the Medium, I distinctly heard, on many occasions, a rustle of clothing, and once or twice a slight creak of the chair, as though the Medium had moved her body from one side to the other, which she could easily have done without taking her feet away from those of the person she faced.

Upon one of those present inquiring why the whisper always sounded as if made by the same voice, the Medium stated that the whisper did always sound the same, and that she was sorry to have to add, that it always sounded as if made by the voice of the Medium.

Upon one occasion a light appeared and re-appeared two or three times in front of the Medium, passing from near her knee up for a foot or two. The light was indistinct, apparently phosphorescent, and passed so quickly that it could not be examined. It was described by the Medium, however, as a form of a child from the Spirit world.

Those present changed their seats during the séance, as suggested, but without producing more satisfactory results. The séance lasted about two hours.

At Mrs. Lord's own suggestion before the séance, two women present took the Medium into another room, and searched her clothes.

GEO. S. FULLERTON,
Secretary.

February 20th, 1885.

The Commission met on Friday, February 20th, 1885, at 8 P.M., again at the house of Mr. Furness, to attend a second séance in the presence of Mrs. Lord.

On the part of the Commission were present Mr. Furness, Mr. Sellers and Mr. Fullerton. There were also present several women and men, some of whom had been present at the previous sitting. The circle, when formed, was about six feet in diameter.

A ring was given by the Medium to Mr. Sellers and another to Miss Logan to wear during the evening, with the expectation that they might be taken by the Spirits and passed to another person in the circle, in accordance with the unexpressed wish of the one holding the ring. This was not done during the evening.

A small musical-box was also given to one of the women to hold, and a zither placed upon the lap of a man. The former was, during the séance, taken from the woman holding it, and passed to another person in the circle. The Medium sat as before, with her hands free, while those in the circle clasped hands, as was done on the former evening, each one having his left wrist grasped by the right hand of his neighbor, or *vice versa.*

The zither was undisturbed during the evening.

Touches were felt here and there on the knees of those in the circle, and whispers were again heard from time to time.

The whispers were, as before, *never simultaneous* with the speeches of the Medium, which were heard just after in another part of the circle.

I distinctly noticed, on several occasions, the same rustle, as of a change of position on the part of the Medium, between the whisper and the remark by the Medium.

Many Spirit forms were described by the Medium as coming to those present, with about the same proportion of success as on the former evening.

At various times during the sitting, lights were seen, which appeared and disappeared rapidly. They were indistinct and phosphorescent—such as can be produced in a dark room by rubbing a match-head, or by exhibiting an object rubbed with a match.

The lights—at least all that were clearly seen by several persons—were within the circle and about the Medium.

Occasionally the Medium spoke of lights as without the circle, and one or two of those present (not members of the Commission) assented. But, as on two such occasions, when those opposite myself described the light as above and behind me, I saw it above and in front of me, or between me and the Medium; there is no reason to believe that they were not deceived by the difficulty of judging of the distance of an indistinct and evanescent appearance in a quite dark place. The direction, but not the distance, can in such a case be readily known.

After a sitting of about two hours, the attempt to produce more striking phenomena was abandoned.

During both séances Mrs. Lord kept up an almost continuous clap-

ping of hands—the noise was not loud, but sufficient to aid in hiding any rustle of the Medium's dress, or creaking of a chair. The Medium also talked constantly.

At the suggestion of the Medium those present joined in singing on two occasions.

The whisper heard in the circle was uniformly hoarse.

A list of those present at these séances and the names of the ladies who searched the Medium, are appended:

Those present at Mrs. Lord's séance on Thursday were: Dr. and Mrs. Pepper, Professor and Mrs. Fullerton, Mr. and Mrs. Sellers, Professor and Mrs. Thompson, Geo. S. Pepper, Mr. Leonard, Miss M. M. Logan, Dr. Leidy, Mrs. A. L. Wister, Miss Agnes Irwin, Walter R. Furness, Dr. C. B. Knerr, Dr. Koenig, Dr. H. H. Furness.

Those present at Friday's séance were: Professor Fullerton, Miss Smith, Mr. and Mrs. Sellers, Dr. Leidy, Mr. Leonard, Mr. and Mrs. F. Furness, Mrs. A. L. Wister, Miss Irwin and Miss Sophie Irwin, Miss Logan, Mr. and Mrs. F. M. Dick, Mrs. J. E. Carpenter, H. H. Furness. Mrs. A. L. Wister, Mrs. Dr. Pepper, Women Searchers.

GEO. S. FULLERTON,
Secretary.

May 27th, 1885.

On May 27th, The Seybert Commission held a meeting at the house of Mr. Furness, at 8 P.M., to examine the phenomena occurring in the presence of Mr. Pierre L. O. A. Keeler, a professional Medium.

There were present on the part of the Commission, Dr. Pepper, Mr. Furness, Dr. Koenig, Dr. White, Dr. Knerr, Mr. Sellers and Mr. Fullerton. The following friends of the Commission were also present:

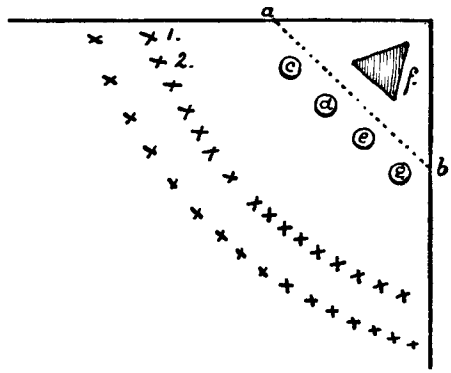
Mr. F. Furness, Mr. W. R. Furness, Mr. J. Foster Kirk, Mr. Yost, Mrs. E. D. Gillespie, Miss Gillespie, Mrs. Dr. Mitchell, Mrs. C. B. Rossell, Mrs. Dr. Pepper, Mrs. Sellers, Mrs. A. L. Wister, Mrs. Dr. Knerr, Miss Agnes Irwin, Miss M. M. Logan.

There were also present, as introduced by the Medium, the Medium's wife, Mrs. Keeler; Col. S. P. Kase and Mrs. Kase, and Dr. Annie D. Ramburger.

The Medium, Mr. Keeler, is a young man, apparently about thirty years of age, with well cut features, curly, brown hair, a small, sandy moustache, and rather worn and anxious expression; he is strongly

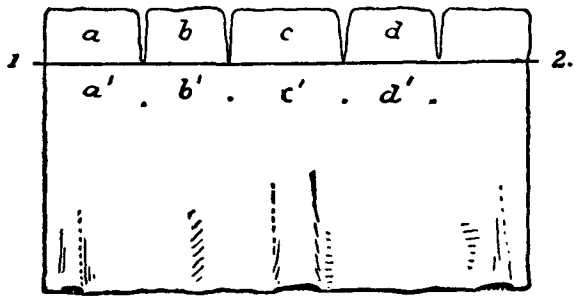
built, about five feet eight inches high, and with rather short, quite broad, and very muscular hands and strong wrists. The hands were examined by Dr. Pepper and Mr. Fullerton after the séance.

The séance was held in Mr. Furness's drawing-room, and a space was curtained off by the Medium in the north-east corner, thus:



The curtain is represented by *a*, *b*; *c*, *d* and *e* are three chairs placed in front of the curtain by the Medium, in one of which (*e*) he afterwards sat; *g* denotes the position of Mrs. Keeler; *f* is a small table, placed within the curtain, and upon which were a tambourine, a guitar, two bells, a hammer, a metallic ring; the asterisks show the positions of the spectators, who sat in a double row—the two marked (1) and (2) indicate the positions taken by Mrs. Kase and Col. Kase, according to the directions of the Medium.

The curtain, or rather curtains, were of black muslin, and arranged as follows: There was a plain black curtain, which was stretched across the corner, falling to the floor. Its height, when in position, was 53 inches; it was made thus:



The cord which held the curtain was 1, 2, and the flaps which are represented as standing above it (*a*, *b*, *c*, etc.), fell down over *a'*, *b'*, *c'*, etc., and could be made to cover the shoulders of one sitting with his back against the curtain. A black curtain was also pinned against the wall, in the space curtained off, partly covering it. Another curtain was added to the one pictured, as will be described later.

The Medium then asked Col. Kase to say a few words as to the necessity of observing the conditions, need of harmony, etc. And then the Medium himself spoke a few words of similar import. He then drew the curtain (shown on the preceding page) along the cord (1, 2) and fastened it; placed three wooden chairs in front of the curtain, as indicated in the cut, and saying he needed to form a battery, asked Miss Agnes Irwin to sit in chair (*d*), and Mr. Yost in chair (*c*), the Medium himself sitting in chair (*e*). A black curtain was then passed by Mrs. Keeler over Mr. Keeler, Miss Irwin and Mr. Yost, being fastened at *g*, between *e* and *d*, between *d* and *c*, and beyond *a:* thus entirely covering the three sitting in front of the stretched curtain up to their necks; and when the flaps before mentioned were pulled down over their shoulders, nothing could be seen but the head of each.

Before this last curtain was fastened over them, the Medium placed both his hands upon the forearm and wrist of Miss Irwin, the sleeve being pulled up for the purpose, and Miss Irwin grasped with her right hand the left wrist of Mr. Yost; his right hand being in sight to the right of the curtain.

After some piano-music, the Medium said he felt no power from this 'battery,' and asked Mrs. E. D. Gillespie to take Miss Irwin's place. Hands and curtain were arranged as before.

The lights were turned down until the room was quite dim. Those present sang.

During the singing, the Medium turned to speak to Mr. Yost, and his body, which had before faced rather away from the two other persons of the 'battery' (which position would have brought his right arm out in front of the stretched curtain)—his body was now turned the other way, so that, had he released his grasp upon Mrs. Gillespie's arm, his own right arm could have had free play in the curtained space behind him. His left knee also no longer stood out under the curtain in front, but showed a change of position.

At this time Mrs. Gillespie declared she felt a touch, and soon after so did Mr. Yost. The Medium's body was distinctly inclined toward Mr. Yost at the time. Mrs. Gillespie said she felt taps, but declared

that, to the best of her knowledge, she still felt the Medium's two hands upon her arm.

Raps indicated that the Spirit, George Christy, was present. As one of those present played on the piano, the tambourine was played in the curtained space and thrown over the curtain; bells were rung; the guitar was thrummed a little. At this time the Medium's face was toward Mrs. Gillespie, and his right side toward the curtain. His body was further in against the curtain than either of the others. Upon being asked, Mrs. Gillespie again said she thought she still felt two hands upon her arm.

The guitar was then thrust out, at least the end of it was, at the bottom of the curtain, between Mrs. Gillespie and the Medium. Mrs. Keeler drew away the curtain from over the toes of the Medium's boots, to show where his feet were; the guitar was thrummed a little. Had the Medium's right arm been free, the thrumming could have been done quite easily with one hand.

Afterwards the guitar was elevated above the curtain; the tambourine, which was by Mrs. Keeler placed upon a stick held up within the enclosure, was made to whirl by the motion of the stick. The phenomena occurred successively, not simultaneously.

When the guitar was held up, and when the tambourine was made to whirl, both of these were to the right of the Medium, chiefly behind Mrs. Gillespie; they were just where they might have been produced by the right arm of the Medium, had it been free.

Two clothes-pins were then passed over the curtain, and they were used in drumming to piano-music. They could easily be used in drumming by one hand alone, the fingers being thrust into them.

The pins were afterwards thrown out over the curtain. Mr. Sellers picked one up as soon as it fell, and found it warm in the split, as though it had been worn. The drumming was probably upon the tambourine.

A hand was seen moving rapidly with a trembling motion—which prevented it from being clearly observed—above the back curtain between Mr. Yost and Mrs. Gillespie. Paper was passed over the curtain into the Cabinet and notes were soon thrown out. The notes could have been written upon the small table within the enclosure by the right hand of the Medium, had it been free. Mrs. Keeler then passed a coat over the curtain, and an arm was passed through the sleeve, fingers, with the cuff around them, being shown over the curtain. They were kept moving, and a close scrutiny was not possible.

Mr. Furness was then invited to hold a writing-tablet in front of the

curtain, when the hand, almost concealed by the coat-sleeve and the flaps mentioned as attached to the curtain, wrote with a pencil on the tablet. The writing was rapid, and the hand, when not writing, was kept in constant tremulous motion. The hand was put forth in this case not over the top curtain, but came from under the flap, and could easily have been the Medium's right hand were it disengaged, for it was about on a level with his shoulder and to his right, between him and Mrs. Gillespie. Mr. Furness was allowed to pass his hand close to the curtain and grasp the hand for a moment. It was a *right* hand.

Soon after the Medium complained of fatigue, and the sitting was discontinued. It was declared by the Spiritualists present to be a fairly successful séance. When the curtains were removed, the small table in the enclosure was found to be overturned, and the bells, hammer, etc., on the floor.

It is interesting to note the space within which all the manifestations occurred. They were, without exception, where they would have been had they been produced by the Medium's right arm. Nothing happened to the left of the Medium, nor very far over to the right. The sphere of activity was between the Medium and Mr. Yost, and most of the phenomena occurred, as, for example, the whirling of the tambourine, behind Mrs. Gillespie.

The front curtain—*i. e.*, the main curtain which hung across the corner—was 85 inches in length, and the cord which supported it, 53 inches from the floor. The three chairs which were placed in front of it were side by side, and it would not have been difficult for the Medium to reach across and touch Mr. Yost. When Mrs. Keeler passed objects over the curtain, she invariably passed them to the right of the Medium, although her position was on his left; and the clothes-pins, paper, pencil, etc., were all passed over at a point where the Medium's right hand could easily have reached them.

To have produced the phenomena by using his right hand, the Medium would have to have passed it under the curtain at his back. This curtain was not quite hidden by the front one at the end near the Medium, and this end both Mr. Sellers and Dr. Pepper saw rise at the beginning of the séance.

The only thing worthy of consideration, as opposed to a natural explanation of the phenomena, was the grasp of the Medium's hands on Mrs. Gillespie's arm.

The grasp was evidently a tight one above the wrist, for the arm was bruised for about four inches. There was no evidence of a similar pressure above that, as the marks on the arm extended in all about five or

six inches only. The pressure was sufficient to destroy the sensibility of the fore-arm, and it is doubtful whether Mrs. Gillespie with her arm in such a condition could distinguish between the grasp of one hand, with a divided pressure (applied by the two last fingers and the thumb and index) and a double grip by two hands. Three of our number, Mr. Sellers, Mr. Furness and Dr. White, can, with one hand, perfectly simulate the double grip.

It is specially worthy of note that Mrs. Gillespie declared that, when the Medium first laid hold of her arm with his right hand before the curtain was put over them, it was with an under grip, and she *felt his right arm under her left.* But when the Medium asked her if she felt both his hands upon her arm, and she said yes, she could feel the grasp, but no arm under hers, though she moved her elbow around to find it —she felt a hand, but not an arm, and at no time during the séance did she find that arm.

(Taken from notes made during the séance and immediately after it.)

GEO. S. FULLERTON,
Secretary.

N. B.—It should be noted that both the Medium and Mr. Yost took off their coats before being covered with the curtain. It was suggested by Dr. Pepper that this might have been required by the Medium as a precaution against movements on the part of Mr. Yost. The white shirt-sleeves would have shown against the black background.

G. S. F.

December 29th, 1885.

There was a meeting of The Seybert Commission this evening, at the house of Mr. Furness, on Washington Square, to investigate some Materializations promised by the Mediums, Dr. Rothermel and Mr. Powell.

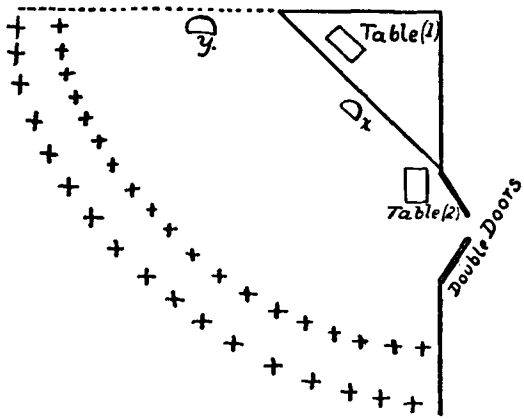
There were present Mr. Furness, Dr. Leidy, Professor Thompson, Dr. S. Weir Mitchell, Dr. White, Dr. Knerr, Mr. Fullerton, Colonel Kase, Mr. Frank Furness, Mrs. J. Dundas Lippincott, Mrs. Dr. Pepper, Mrs. A. L. Wister, and a number of others.

The Mediums arrived with quite a bundle of apparatus, and stretched their curtain where Mr. Keeler had his, across the corner of the parlor, from the door leading into the hall to the edge of the window. The curtain was similar to that of Mr. Keeler in its general character, and,

as in that case, the whole corner was draped in black. The shape of the Cabinet was triangular.

The Mediums said it was impossible to produce materialized forms as they had expected, and proceeded to give much the same sort of a séance as Mr. Keeler's—in this case, however, the hands of the Medium covered by the curtain being fastened with tape, instead of being held.

The arrangement of the curtain, positions of the Mediums, and the positions of the spectators were as indicated.



X Dr. Rothermel—a curtain at his back and one in front of him, his head through a hole in the upper part of the outer flap of the double curtain.

Y Mr. Powell.

* * * Spectators.

On table (2) was a music-box, and on table (1), within the Cabinet, bells, a zither, etc.

The lights were all extinguished but one, and that one was prevented from throwing light on the Medium by a shade placed upon one side of it—it was turned low. The light was not so good as during Mr. Keeler's séance.

Before the lights were put out, Dr. White was asked to tie the Medium, and Mrs. Lippincott to sew the ends of the ribbon and tape with which he was tied.

A ribbon was tied around each leg above the knee, and the ends sewed to his trowsers. A bit of black tape was then passed under the ribbon and tied around the wrist, the ends being knotted and sewed together by Mrs. Lippincott. His right hand was thus fastened

to his right leg, and his left hand to his left leg; though he still had some freedom of motion, and could easily reach one hand with the other.

Dr. Rothermel was then placed as indicated, behind the outer curtain, and the lights extinguished as described.

He asked for a drink of water, which was given him by Mr. Powell, who stood directly in front of him while he drank it, and hid him from the audience.

Then the zither played, a cap was thrown out over the curtain, a hand (to the right of the Medium) was shown over the curtain.

Bells were rung, papers thrown out, a drum accompaniment to the piano played, as by Mr. Keeler, and the drum-sticks thrown out.

Mr. Powell wet in a glass some handkerchiefs with water, and passed them over the curtain, they were passed out with a message written on them in indelible ink. This could easily have been done with an indelible pencil. (The small table within the curtain was within easy reach of the right hand of the Medium, had it been free, and could have been used for such work.)

The music-box on table (2) was set off—was rattled several times. (It could have been done by the Medium's left hand if it were free.)

The person, to whom each of the above-mentioned handkerchiefs was to be returned, was indicated by raps from the Spirit. (The Spirit was in error in returning handkerchiefs to Dr. Mitchell and Mr. Fullerton.)

The zither was put out at the right and left hand lower corners of the curtain. (It could have been done by the Medium, were his hands free.)

The Medium professed to be then controlled by the Spirit of a young girl—Emma Hirsch. He spoke in an unnatural and squeaky voice, but occasionally lapsed into his natural voice. The Spirit declared the Medium unconscious, but refused to allow any medical examination of his condition.

The Mediums were then asked to allow Dr. Rothermel's hands to be examined. After a little delay, the curtain was folded back and the hands exposed.

Mr. Fullerton was permitted to examine them by the light of a match only, and very hastily. They did not allow a candle, which had been lighted, to be brought near. As Mr. Fullerton approached to examine the knots, Mr. Powell came close and seemed very much afraid they would be touched. He kept reiterating, "Don't touch them!" "Don't touch them!" "It would be very dangerous!" The examination was hasty and unsatisfactory, as Mr. Powell and Dr. Rothermel both said

that he (the latter) could endure it only a moment. Hasty as it was, it showed that the knots, which had been on top of the wrists, were now underneath; the tapes, as is mentioned later, were, at the end of the séance, found cut close to the knots.

Whether the tapes were really in their former state, and not already cut, could only be known by examining them all around, and such an examination was not allowed.

It should be stated that before this, and after some of the manifestations, the Medium, with some convulsive movement, as if pulled and pushed by Spirits, came out from under the curtain, and stood with his hands on his legs, as if tied there, but it was too dark to see whether he was really tied, or merely held his hands there, and no examination was made.

Soon after, the Medium declared that the Spirits were cutting him loose, and when the curtain was removed and lights brought, the tapes which had bound his wrists were found to be cut through close to the knots. Whether this was done at the beginning of the séance, leaving the Medium's hands free from the beginning, or at the time indicated by the Medium, there was no means of proving. The cutting of the tapes made the tying and sewing tests quite valueless.

(Taken from notes made during the séance and immediately after.)

GEO. S. FULLERTON,
Secretary.

The following advertisement was, in March, 1885, inserted in *The Religio-Philosophical Journal*, of Chicago, *The Banner of Light*, in Boston, and *The Public Ledger*, in Philadelphia:

"THE SEYBERT COMMISSION FOR INVESTIGATING MODERN SPIRITUALISM," of the University of Pennsylvania, hereby requests all Mediums for Independent Slate Writing, and no other at present, who are willing to submit their manifestations to the examination of this Commission, to communicate with the undersigned, stating terms, etc.

HORACE HOWARD FURNESS,
Acting Chairman,
Philadelphia, Pa.

SPIRITUAL PHOTOGRAPHY.

When Mr. Keeler, a well-known "Spiritual Photographer," was in the city, the Acting Chairman called on him, and requested from him in writing a statement of his terms and the conditions under which an investigation by this Commission could be held. The following reply was received from him:

1614 Green Street,
Philadelphia, November 6th, 1885.

MR. FURNESS.

DEAR SIR:—In regard to giving the Photographic Séances I feel that I am obliged to ask an observance of the following conditions: That there be three Séances, for which I shall expect the sum of $300. I desire only the regularly appointed members of the Commission on your side to be present, I to have the privilege to invite an equal number of persons, if necessary, to harmonize the antagonistic element which might be produced by those persons not in perfect sympathy with the cause.

I must have the right to demand, if conditions make it necessary, the exclusive use of the dark room and my own instrument.

The Séances to be given at your own residence.

As I cannot guard against the influences which others may bring, I shall expect to be paid the afore-named sum whether my efforts prove satisfactory or not, although I hope for the most favorable results, and to this end I would urge the members of the Commission to surround me with the most congenial and harmonious conditions possible.

These Séances to begin on the 12th inst.

If this meets with your approval an early answer is solicited.

Very respectfully,

W. M. KEELER.

MEMORANDUM FOR THE SEYBERT COMMISSION.

I called this morning (Saturday, 14th November, 1885), on Mr. W. M. Keeler, and told him, in effect, in the very words as well as I can remember, as follows: that I had received his letter of the 6th inst., containing his terms, and had consulted the Commission in regard to them; and that our conclusion had been quickly reached. He must know how very simple a process this 'composite photography' is, and that among photographers there is no mystery whatever in it. For his own process he claimed a Spiritual Agency—this agency we were willing

to accept (in my own case I was anxious to accept it) if, after a thorough investigation, his process could not be explained by well-known physical laws. The conditions he demanded were such as to render any investigation simply silly. His exclusive use of the dark room, which could have nothing to do with Spiritual forces, for the Spirits had already done their work in the Camera, utterly precluded us from discovering whether his processes were in anywise different from ordinary photography. He wished to know in what way this prevented us from detecting fraud if the operations took place in a private house where he was a stranger. I replied that without for a moment impugning his honesty, he must know that unless we were present with him in the dark room, we could not affirm that our marks had not been duplicated on substituted plates.

Furthermore, that we had regarded his terms as intentionally prohibitory. The demand for three hundred dollars was so extraordinary that we could regard it in no other light than as a desire to avoid an investigation altogether. I asked him what his ordinary charge was, and he replied two dollars for each sitting, and that he made from twenty to forty dollars a day, when he settled down to work.

That there might be no misunderstanding, I repeated my reply to his wife: that we were ready to investigate, if we could be allowed to watch the very points where material agency ceases and spiritual begins, but these very points Mr. Keeler forbade us to examine, and that the failure rested with him.

At one time his vexation (which was manifest) a little ran away with his discretion. He asked, with somewhat of a sneer, 'How did you expect to investigate it?' I replied that 'I could not answer for others, but for myself I should have liked to have him say, when we of the Commission met him, 'The Spirits are present, through my Mediumship, here is my Camera in which the Spirits will manifest themselves on the sensitized plates, take it, and so long as I am present with my influence, do what you please.' He laughed outright and said 'That would be a good thing.'

I endeavored throughout the interview to impress him with our utter incredulity in the spiritual nature of his photographs, and yet to give him no loop to hang a charge of discourteous or illiberal treatment on. I asked him to give me, in my private capacity, a sitting at his earliest convenience, and that I should not be satisfied with less than a cherub on my head, one on each shoulder, and a full-blown angel on my breast. He laughingly assented.

HORACE HOWARD FURNESS,
Acting Chairman Seybert Commission.

I ought, perhaps, to add that I showed to Mr. Keeler a composite photograph taken by one of my sons, wherein a Spirit quite as ethereal as any of Mr. Keeler's, appears in the background. He looked at it, and returned it to me without remark.

H. H. F.

March 30th, 1886.

The Seybert Commission met this evening at the house of Dr. Pepper, to investigate Spiritistic phenomena produced through the Mediumship of Mr. Briggs (for an account of Mr. Briggs see a previous report).

There were present, Dr. Pepper, Dr. Leidy, Dr. S. Weir Mitchell, Professor Koenig, Dr. White, Dr. Knerr, Mr. Fullerton and two friends of Dr. Pepper, Mr. Charles G. Smith and Mr. Robert S. Davis; also the Medium, Mr. Fred. Briggs.

The séance was in Dr. Pepper's office; a square table (about 3½ feet square) was placed in the room near the centre, and was supplemented by an oblong table (about 4 feet by 3) placed with one end touching the side of the former, upon the Medium's declaring the former too small. Seats were taken around the tables.

A banjo, a musical box, a zither, a couple of slates and a fan were on the tables.

The Medium insisted that there should be total darkness, and a shawl was hung over the window to exclude all light.

At first hands were joined around the table. Then the Medium suggested breaking the circle. His hands were then quite free. Draughts of air were felt (possibly the fan); the Medium kept making noises, blowing and breathing hard, talking, etc.; the slates on the table were moved, the guitar was twanged, the music-box played. During all this the Medium asked that the hands of all present be kept on the table.

The Medium stated that Mr. Seybert was present. He declared that Mr. Seybert expressed himself as satisfied with the efforts of the Commission to make a fair investigation.

When the Medium stated that some message had been written on one of the slates by Mr. Seybert, the gas was lit, and we found on one slate "I am here." No one present was able to declare it Mr. Seybert's handwriting, as none were familiar with his writing.

The light was then turned low. Mr. Smith was asked to sit in the place of Dr. Mitchell. He held, as directed, one slate up under the

table, and the Medium held the other under the table over his own knee. After some conversation the Medium drew out his slate, and the light being turned up we found on it:

"I am with you.

John Pepper."

It was too dark to watch the Medium during this last occurrence. The conversation, which was general, would have prevented writing from being heard.

Light turned up—both slates held by the Medium under the table —no result.

The light was then turned low. Dr. Leidy was asked to sit next the Medium. Some noise and confusion resulted from making the change. Then the Medium asked Dr. Leidy to put his hand also upon a slate which the Medium was holding up under the table. Attention was then called to a scratching sound, which might have been writing. The slate was taken out by Dr. Leidy, and the light turned up. The following was written on it:

"John Smith is with you like a young son.

John Lydy."

It was, of course, possible that the writing was done before Dr. Leidy put his hand on it, as the slate was not then examined.

The Medium suggested that we ask mental questions; several did so, without result.

The light was then turned up. Hands were joined. Some feeble raps were heard; they apparently issued from under the table.

Slates were held under the table, but without result.

The light was then turned low. A slate was held under the table by the Medium. He breathed hard, and made no little noise for some time. Then Dr. Koenig was asked to put his hand on the slate. A scratching was heard. When the light was turned up the slate contained the message:

"I will help you all.

Dr. Benj. Rush."

With this the séance ended.

(Copied from notes taken during the séance. Written out the day after.)

Geo. S. Fullerton,
Secretary.

April 11th, 1886.

I attended a séance at the house of Colonel Kase, 1601 North 15th Street, Philadelphia, on April 11th, at 8.10 P.M. The Medium was Mrs. Best.

There were about a dozen persons present; at least two of them, besides Mrs. Best, claimed to be Mediums.

The séance was in Colonel Kase's sitting-room. The "Cabinet" was made by stretching a curtain, suspended to a curved rod, across one corner. It could hold a chair, and was perhaps four feet across, or more. The Medium, Mrs Best, took her seat in the chair and drew the curtain. The room was made *totally* dark—a cloth being used to cover the crack of the door. The spectators, who were arranged in a deep curve facing the cabinet, were asked to sing a hymn.

As we sang, a voice from the Cabinet, a deep contralto, joined in, loudly. Soon something resembling in outline a human form covered with drapery appeared at the Cabinet. It was indistinctly luminous. No face was visible; nor could the face of any other Spirit, which appeared during the evening, be discerned even in faintest outline. The light seemed to belong entirely to the drapery. The Spirit was declared to be Apollonius, and made a speech in a loud, harsh voice. Other similar forms appeared one after the other, and spoke in different tones—all the voices, however, with the exception of Apollonius's and that of another speaker, were more or less like hoarse whispers. When the Spirit of Mr. T. R. Hazard appeared, his voice was by no means natural, and sounded like a bad imitation.

A form calling itself "Lottie" appeared, kissed a Medium present, and at my request passed its hands over my head and face. Its hands were covered with luminous drapery which hung down perhaps a foot. I was allowed to touch it. It felt like soft tulle. A very strong odor of sandal-wood prevailed, and the smell of phosphorus, even if it had been used, could not easily, at a little distance, have been discerned. The luminous appearance of the drapery did not seem to be due to phosphorus—it did not fume. It seemed rather such as might have been produced by luminous paint—a mixture luminous in the dark after exposure to the light. I noticed on the hand, or what, from position, I inferred to be the hand, of the form, a distinctly phosphorescent appearance; it was on this account I asked it to touch me. As it passed its hand over my face I distinctly smelt phosphorus.

At one time two forms appeared near each other and near the Cabinet. They might easily have been produced by holding up luminous drapery. Tall and then short forms then appeared one

at a time. If the drapery were raised or lowered the appearance could readily have been produced, and the person holding it would have been quite invisible.

The different voices that spoke *never* spoke simultaneously. A large rug on the floor in front of the Cabinet would have prevented steps from being heard, had the form been the Medium. On two occasions, when I suggested that I recognized the form by asking, "Is it———?" the Spirit assented, and assumed the character. Both the persons I mentioned are still alive.

The séance began at 8.10 P.M., and lasted two hours and a-half. There was much singing.

The séance was regarded by several Spiritualists who were present as a very satisfactory one. I expressly asked for their opinion.

(Written out on April 13th, from notes made in the car, on my way home from the séance.)

GEO. S. FULLERTON,
Secretary.

January 30th, 1887.

Yesterday I visited Mrs. M. B. Thayer, an Independent Slate Writing Medium, at 1601 North 15th Street, Philadelphia, in hopes of arranging for a séance at that time. I had a conversation of about half an hour with Mrs. Thayer, who asked what I had seen before, and with what Mediums I had sat; but I was not able to get a sitting at once, Mrs. Thayer declaring "the conditions" unsatisfactory. She made an appointment, however, for to-day at 4 P.M. In the hall I met, on my departure, Mrs. Kase, the hostess of the Medium, to whom I am personally known, and who told me in an 'aside' that she would not reveal my identity to the Medium. This might readily have been overheard by the Medium, who was standing close by. [I visited Mrs. Thayer alone, because she had expressed an unwillingness to appear before the Commission, and we found it necessary to visit her as private persons.]

Upon calling to-day, I was ushered into Mrs. Thayer's room, in which stood a small wooden table covered with a red cloth (which hung down, perhaps a foot, on all sides from the edges of the table), ready for the séance. Ten or twelve plain single slates lay in a pile on a piece of furniture near the table.

Mrs. Thayer handed me two of these slates, which I cleaned and examined. I then marked them on the inside, or what became, when I

laid them together, the inside, and held them while she tied them together with a piece of white tape. After they were tied they could be separated an eighth of an inch without difficulty. Holding the slates in my hand, I examined the table and the furniture near it, and then took my seat at the table, Mrs. Thayer sitting opposite me. The table was about 2½x1½ feet. At the suggestion of Mrs. Thayer, I placed the tied slates upon the table under the cloth, and we both placed our hands upon the cloth above them. After waiting for some time for indications of writing, I withdrew the slates from under the cloth, and, as directed, held them with my right hand up against the under surface of the table, Mrs. Thayer placing her left hand upon my right as I held the slates. After holding them thus for some time I was told to withdraw them, and hold them against my forehead. Then I was told to open them and to scrape some pencil-dust over the inner surfaces. This I did, again closing the slates, which Mrs. Thayer tied as before. I was again directed to hold them up against the under surface of the table, and the Medium again placed her hand upon the hand with which I held them. Her hand was not wholly upon mine, but projected beyond it upon my wrist and towards my edge of the slates. After my holding the slates in this position, seemingly without result, until I was very wearied, the Medium suggested my laying them upon my lap and covering them with the table cover, which hung down more on my side than on hers. She said it was necessary that the slates should be concealed. When they were in this position we joined hands upon the table, and she placed her feet upon mine under the table, thus making, as she said, a strong "battery." This seeming to be inefficacious, I was directed to wrap the slates in a cloth given me for the purpose (apparently a small table cover) and to lay them on the floor under the table, placing my left foot upon them. This I did, and the Medium placed one of her feet upon my left foot, taking my hands upon the table, and again forming the "battery." After some waiting, much calling upon the Spirit of Foster to write (this she did at intervals during the séance) and several requests for raps (which did not come), the Medium decided that we should get nothing during the sitting, and it was discontinued. I took up the slates from the floor, took off the cloth and untied the tape; no mark had been made upon them. There had been much conversation during the sitting, the Medium telling me not to keep my mind on the slates, but to put myself into a condition of "passivity." She declared me mediumistic, and said that she doubted whether she would ever be able to get results with me. She stated two or three times that she saw three forms behind me,

but dimly, and could not describe them. One was a "mild and gentle lady, with a beautiful hand." To the only person whom I can remember with a markedly beautiful hand, no one would have applied these adjectives. The sitting was about an hour long.

(Copied and arranged the same evening from notes made in the car on the way home from the séance.)

GEO. S. FULLERTON.

[I arranged for another séance with Mrs. Thayer, to be held some days later, but at the time appointed she refused to see me, giving as excuse indisposition.

G. S. F.—April, 1887.]

On the evening of January 29th, 1887, in company with Dr. J. W. White, I called on Mrs. Thayer, at No. 1601 North 15th Street.

The lady seemed not to be pleased with our visit, and declared that we were no Spiritualists. She reluctantly agreed to give us a séance on the following Sunday, and on parting the gentleman of the house politely invited us to attend a flower séance to be held by the same lady on the following Thursday.

Calling on Sunday, Mrs. Thayer excused herself on account of indisposition.

The next Thursday we attended the flower séance, in which I felt much curiosity from the wonderful story that had been told to me by a Spiritualist friend, who had seen one by the same Medium several years before.

The séance was held in the second story of the back building, in a room which the proprietor of the house informed me he had devoted to the purpose of Spiritualist séances. About thirty persons were assembled, and, without any examination of the premises, they were seated around a long dining-table. In the company Dr. Koenig was the only other member of the Seybert Commission present. The séance was opened with an 'invocation' by a lady, and during the 'manifestations' the company sang popular airs, such as 'Sweet by-and-bye,' etc. The doors and windows were all securely closed and the lights extinguished. Sounds were heard of objects dropping on the table, and from time to time matches were lit and exposed, strewed before the company, cut plants and flowers. There were all of the kind sold at this season by the florists, consisting of a pine bough, fronds of ferns, roses, pinks, tulips, lilies, callas (Richardia) and smilax (Myrsiphyllum). At one

time there fell on the table a heavy body, which proved to be a living terrapin; at another time there appeared a pigeon which flew about the room. The flower manifestation ceased, and the gas was re-lit. A lady then made some remarks on the wonderful phenomena exhibited in evidence of the truth of Spiritualism, and another followed with some sentimentalities on the subject. The proprietor of the house declared that the flowers and other objects brought to view in the séance were not previously in the room, and their appearance could not be explained unless through Spiritual agency. He said that in former years, at similar séances, flowers had appeared in much greater quantities. The Medium, Mrs. Thayer, said she had not before served in a flower séance for several years.

At the next act of the séance, as I understood it, a 'test' was called for. A young man, whose name I did not distinctly hear, now took the chair of the former Medium. He promptly announced the appearance of the Spirit of an Indian girl, and then personified her by assuming a silly address in broken English. In this manner he expressed himself as seeing various Spirits of friends and relatives of the company hovering among them. They were announced by the first name in a rather uncertain and expectant manner, and in a few instances they were supposed to be recognized by some of the company, but mostly did not accord with their knowledge. As an example, the Medium informed Dr. Koenig that a tall man named Charley was holding something over his head and encouraging him in some great enterprise. Dr. Koenig did not recognize the man, nor could he be made to comprehend anything of the subjects of which he was informed by the materialized Indian girl. During this second act of the séance, I could detect nothing that could be attributed to other than ordinary human agency. The Indian girl retired. and the séance closed.

JOSEPH LEIDY.

February 10th, 1887.

I enter Col. Kase's house, 1601 North 15th Street, in company of Drs. Leidy, White and Mr. Sommerville, a friend of the first. We are received by the Colonel and pass scrutiny. The séance takes place in the second story sitting-room. This is furnished with a large oak table, a square piano, and one corner is made into an alcove, the curtains of which are thrown back and reveal several drawings in black and white—one of the young Raphael. Over the mantlepiece a painting representing the apparition of a Spirit-

form, to a young lady sitting in front of a fire-place. On entering this room find the Medium, Mrs. Thayer, engaged in seating the audience. She is a middle-aged lady of good proportions, hair black, color flushed, the light eyes look weary, the lower face rather square, deep lines around the mouth. She is evidently not in very good humor. After a while the company, between twenty and thirty persons, mostly women, get seated.

Owing to the many people present I could not see what preparations had been made. Medium requests that the piano be moved against the door (to keep off illicit Spirits?). Chair placed against the door. Light turned out completely. Singing of "Sweet by-and-bye." Medium requests a lady to invoke Divine blessing. Disgusting cant. More singing. Darkness impenetrable. Sudden bumping noise on the table. Match struck by the Colonel just as something crawls over my hand and falls to the floor. It is a red-bellied terrapin. Some ferns appear neatly arranged on the table in front and to the left of the Medium. Expressions of gratification. Dark. Singing. A pine-bough is thrown against me. Screaming on account of terrapin. Match. Several parties have large lilies in front of them. My neighbor a lily of the valley (he states that his wife said before he left: "I wish you would get a lily of the valley"). Dark. Singing. Match. Dr. Leidy has some red lilies; some smilax and a wreath are on the table. Great astonishment. Colonel Kase says it is wonderful, but during the Centennial year they got tables loaded with flowers (the Medium has not given a flower séance for some years, she says, hence the rather meagre supply.) A lady points out the fact that the flowers are quite cold and have a sort of dew on them. But I found those before me quite dry, as if they had been in the room for some time. The Medium is tired and retires. Mrs. X. is requested to come under the influence of her Spirit-guides, and she does. She puts herself in an oratorical posture, eyes closed, and reels off the common-places of the *Banner of Light:* the Spirits are eager for investigation, but benighted men in the flesh cannot make the conditions, and thus continue to wallow in darkness. The Spirits are kind. They do not damn those poor benighted ones, but still hold out, in beautiful optimism, the hope that all those who do want to know the truth will find it!

Another lady, Mrs. Y., is now called upon to put herself under Spirit-guidance, and she thereupon proceeds to enlighten the sheep-fold how it is possible that these flowers and branches and turtles can come through solid walls and closed windows. "It is all awfully simple; It is nothing but PROJECTION! The Spirits understand the laws of electric

projection; even the electric forces themselves understand the laws of nature and the currents. The electric force snatches the flower, or plant, and propels it along invisible wires. There is no such thing as solid substance, matter is permeable to these forces, and, therefore, it is easy to see how a terrapin can come quick as lightning through a wall." (Verbatim.)

Mr. Copeland is now called upon to give the audience some tests, a rather inoffensive looking young man with hair standing up. The light is turned down; he jerks his head and body, passes his hand over his eyes and begins to talk in broken, childish sentences. A little Indian maid now controls him. The maid describes a tall, bony, black-haired gentleman standing near *me*, with a fatherly look; he is Charley, and holds something, as if I were undertaking some grand enterprise. But as I do not know Charley, Charley disappears, and the spirit of a Quaker gentleman comes to a lady not far from me—all right. Soon, however, the maid is at me again. This time it is William. He has something chemical, like a discovery. Have I not been across the water where people had the cholera and turned black and died? Did I not very much disappoint a young lady over there? Did I give her a ring? Margaret, or some name like that, now comes around. Have I never seen the Medium before? No. Then I should pay him a visit. Wants to talk with me about my past and future. Has much to say; and so on. Do I not go often into a building where many persons work at chemistry? Am I not sceptical?—rather. Wants to cure my scepticism, and so on, *ad nauseam*. Me is tired, me wants go. Again the jerks, the rubbing of the eyes, and the Indian maid is once more Mr. Copeland.

Séance terminates with the payment of one dollar, cash, at 9.30 P.M.

Stifling atmosphere breathed for 1½ hours, for what? *Quelle bêtise!*

GEO. A. KOENIG.

Saturday, March 26th, 1887.

I attended a séance at the house of Col. Kase, 1601 North 15th Street, on Thursday evening, March 24th, Mrs. Wells acting as Medium. There were about thirty persons present, of whom several seemed to be Mediums. The séance was held in the sitting-room in the second story—a room separated by double doors from a smaller room behind. The back room, used as a Cabinet, was shut off by portiéres, and the persons were arranged in front of the curtains, in the form of a deep curve,

Dr. Leidy, Dr. Knerr and myself being put in the second row. Mrs. Thayer directed us where to sit. The room in which we sat was lighted by a single gas-jet, situated some distance behind the spectators; a piece of music was placed before this to prevent any direct light from falling on the curtains, and the gas was turned very low. Mrs. Wells entered the room used as a Cabinet, and took her seat in a chair opposite the curtains. Mrs. Thayer closed the curtains.

After some time Spirits began to show themselves one by one between the curtains, and to whisper. Mrs. Thayer stepped forward and interpreted for them, calling up persons in the circle to receive communications. The forms were very indistinct from the circle, and apparently not very distinct to those called up, as they expressed some dissatisfaction. One man called up to speak with his daughter (one of the better forms) remarked that he "saw her putty good, but not very." One or two of the forms stepped out in front of the curtains (one was dressed as a man, one purported to be Mary, Queen of Scots), but they did not advance to the circle, and the light was so dim that they could not be seen at all clearly. Only on one or two occasions two forms appeared at once, and then not in front of the curtains, but one on each side of one of the curtains—this curtain being pulled together, as though some one were reaching around behind it. The appearance could very readily have been made by the Medium's appearing between the two curtains, and holding up a bit of drapery at the side of one of them. The audience was evidently an uncritical one. When a Spirit called for her husband, Mrs. Thayer, the interpreter, asked, "Has anyone here a wife on the other side?" An old man present stated that his had died two years before. He asked if the Spirit's name were *May*. When he came back to his seat, I heard him remark to his neighbor that that "must have been her, but she had more flesh on than when I knew her." No examination was made before or after the séance of either room or Medium, and no tests of any sort were applied. The séance lasted about an hour and a-half.

GEO. S. FULLERTON,
Secretary.

(Copied and arranged from notes made in the car on the way home from this séance—Saturday evening, March 26th, 1887.)

N. B.—I have neglected to state (though it is mentioned in my notes) that the séance was commenced by an "invocation" from Mrs. Coleman, who sat near the curtains. It was in no wise remarkable.

G. S. F.

Dr. Leidy.

The undersigned, a member of The Seybert Commission, appointed by the University, in company with one or more of the other members, at different times, from March, 1884, to April, 1887, attended twelve séances with reputed Spiritualist Mediums. Led to view Spiritualism with the respect due to its importance, based on the reflection that many of the most intelligent and honorable of the community had become convinced of its truth, I undertook the investigation of the subject free from conscious prejudice, and with a desire to observe with unbiased judgment the phenomena which might be presented to me in the séances of Spiritualist Mediums. Of the dozen séances attended in company with other members of the Commission, five were held with three Slate-writing Mediums, two with as many Rapping Mediums, and five with four Materializing Mediums. All the Mediums possessed more or less celebrity as such among the advocates of Spiritualism. I further attended, unaccompanied by members of the Commission, three séances, of which one was held with one of the former Materializing Mediums, and two with other Rapping Mediums.

The reputed phenomena or manifestations were carefully observed, as far as circumstances would permit, *i. e.*, under the conditions ordinarily exacted by Mediums.

I have kept a record of my observations of the Spiritualist séances, but it is unnecessary to relate them here. As the result of my experience thus far, I must confess that I have witnessed no extraordinary manifestation, such as we ordinarily hear described as evidence of communication between this and the Spirit world. On the contrary, all the exhibitions I have seen have been complete failures in what was attempted or expected, or they have proved to be deceptions and tricks of jugglery. Sometimes accompanied by buffoonery, I never saw in them anything solemn or impressive, and never did they give the slightest positive information of interest. Having thus far failed to discover anything in evidence of the truth of Spiritualism, I yet remain ready to receive such evidence from an honest Medium.

One of the Slate-writing Mediums, with whom we held several séances, relieved the tedium of waiting for a slate-communication by writing in pencil on slips of paper, under Spirit control, as we were assured, communications from a succession of Spirits. The hand of these communications was good, and in each one different as it would appear from different individuals. There was, however, in all a similarity of expression and grammatical construction, which indicated a

want of entire Spirit control. One of these communications, in my possession, reads literally thus:

"People have thought my manner and habit very strange indeed regarding the Truth of Spirit control There has been many things practiced which I see now was wrong and foolish yet the Truth stills exist that we can come back and make ourselves felt you ask if I am pleased with what Thomas [probably Thomas R. Hazard, who was with us at the time] is doing I am in many respects though there are things best left undone and unsaid You are perfectly aware of my past feelings also of my desire to have the truth properly investigated which I feel it will be and the Truth and Truth only sought after by the Committee I am more concious now than a time back Henry Seybert"

Another communication in my possession, obtained by a friend from the same Medium, at another séance, is in an equally good and strikingly different hand from the former, and reads thus: "Yes both of those Spirits were there and were plainly seen There was others there that were imperceptable Alice Cary"

As examples of communications, in irregular scrawls on slips of paper, in my possession, thrown from behind a screen by a Materialized Spirit, at a séance of Mr. Keeler, are the following: "Hello folks" "Oh I am a big slugger" "How is your nose Doc" "I am seeing the sad result of my work. H. Seibert" [*sic*]. The punctuation and spelling are carefully copied.

JOSEPH LEIDY.

THE SLADE-ZOELLNER INVESTIGATION.

Perhaps no other investigation of Spiritistic phenomena has exercised so strong an influence upon the public mind in America, at least, as that conducted by Professor J. C. F. Zoellner and his colleagues in Leipsic in 1877 and 1878. In November and December of the year 1877 and in May of 1878, Professor Zoellner had a number of séances with Dr. Henry Slade, the American Medium, in Leipsic, the results of which he has narrated in his "Scientific Treatises," and which he finds of special interest in connection with certain physical speculations with which he was before this time occupied. He declares himself specially authorized to mention by name as present at some of his investigations his colleagues, Professors Fechner and Scheibner, of the University of Leipsic, and Professor Weber of Goettingen. These three, he states, were perfectly convinced of the reality of the observed

facts, and that they were not to be attributed to imposture or prestidigitation. He also mentions the presence of Professor Wundt at at least one of the sittings.

The phenomena narrated by Zoellner—the bursting of the wooden screen, the passages of coins out of closed boxes, the abnormal actions of the solid wooden rings, the tying of knots in the endless cord, the prints made upon smoked paper by the feet of four-dimentional beings —all these have become classic in Spiritistic literature, and the accounts may be obtained in convenient form collected, arranged and translated into English by Mr. C. C. Massey, of Lincoln's Inn, London.

Of these phenomena themselves, verification is, at this late date, manifestly out of the question. The only published accounts are those made by Zoellner, and in the absence of notes made at the time, all descriptions of phenomena given now by the other persons present would be valueless, except as indicating the impression made upon them at the time by the occurrences.

But, though the phenomena themselves cannot be satisfactorily sifted, the men who were engaged in the investigation are, with the exception of Zoellner himself, still living, and it occurred to me when in Germany during the past summer, that a conference with each of these men, and an inquiry into their qualifications for making such an investigation into the phenomena of Spiritism, might be of no small value. These men are: *William Wundt*, Professor of Philosophy in the University of Leipsic; *Gustav Theodore Fechner*, now Professor Emeritus of Physics in the University of Leipsic; *W. Scheibner*, Professor of Mathematics in the University of Leipsic; and *Wilhelm Weber*, Professor Emeritus of Physics in the University of Goettingen—all of them men of eminence in their respective lines of scholarship.

On Saturday, June 19th, I called upon Professor Wundt at his home in Leipsic; with respect to the investigation of 1877-78 he gave me the following information, which I noted down during my conversation with him, asking him to repeat the points mentioned as I noted them, so as to avoid any error or misunderstanding, and which I copied out, with merely verbal changes, two days later.

Professor Wundt said:

1. That at the séances at which he himself was present (and he was present at two or three of them) the conditions of observation were very unsatisfactory. All hands had to be kept on the table, and no one was allowed to look under it.

2. That all that he saw done looked as if it might have been done by jugglery.

3. That the writing on slates was very suspicious—the German was bad, just such German as Slade spoke.

4. That Professor Weber, who was present at the sittings, was a very old man at the time, and presumably not an acute observer.

5. That Professor Fechner, another of those present, was afflicted with an incipient cataract, and could see very little.

6. That Professor Zoellner himself was at the time decidedly not in his right mind; his abnormal mental condition being clearly indicated in his letters and in his intercourse with his family.

7. That he (Professor Wundt) had not a high respect for the scientific judgment of Professor Ulrici, of Halle, who had been so much impressed by the report made by Professor Zoellner; Professor Ulrici he thought literary and poetical, but not scientific.

It will be seen that some of the points mentioned by Professor Wundt are suggestive; but I will postpone an examination of his statements, as of those of each of the others, until they have all been given and can be compared.

On the same day (June 19th) I called upon Professor Fechner, also at his home in Leipsic. Professor Fechner, who no longer lectures, being old and feeble, and suffering from cataract of the eyes, made the following statements, each of which I translated to him for his approval, after I had set it down:

1. That he himself was present at but two sittings, and that these were not very decisive.

2. That he did not look upon Slade as a juggler, but accepted the objective reality of the facts; that he did this, however, not on the strength of his own observations, for these were unsatisfactory, but because he had faith in Professor Zoellner's powers of observation.

3. That what he saw might have been produced by juggling.

4. That the sittings at which he was present were held at night, and that he could not remember what sort of a light they had.

5. That Zoellner's mental derangement came on very gradually, so that it would be difficult to say when it began; but that from the time of his experiments with Slade it was more pronounced. He (Fechner) did not think, however, that it incapacitated Zoellner as an observer, the derangement being emotional; but, such as it was, it was clearly shown in his family and in his intercourse with friends.

6. Professor Fechner referred me to Professors Scheibner and Weber for information, saying that these two were present at most of the sittings.

I failed at this time to meet Professor Scheibner, who, though resident in Leipsic, happened to be away from home on a visit; but, having made an appointment with him by letter, I returned to Leipsic on July 3d, and called upon him at his home; upon this occasion he gave me more full and satisfactory details concerning Professor Zoellner's investigation than I succeeded in obtaining from any of the others. The notes which I made during my conversation with him I translated to him, and corrected in accordance with his suggestions before leaving his house. After my return to Halle I copied my notes out in full, and sent them by mail to Professor Scheibner, with the request that he correct them and return them to me at Berlin, signing his name to them if they correctly represented his opinions. In answer he enclosed me the copy which I had sent him, corrected where he thought the notes inexact, and an accompanying letter, stating that he did not forbid me to use the material which he had given me, but that he did not wish to set his name to any publication, if only for the reason that he was not sufficiently familiar with the English to judge accurately as to the shades of meaning, and thus could not say whether he accurately agreed with the notes as they stand, or not.

The copy which he corrected and returned to me I place at length in this Report, merely translating his corrections (very literally), and inserting them at the points indicated by himself. They are enclosed in quotation marks. In some instances, my desire for exactitude in the translations has resulted in very bad English; the shape of my own paragraphs is due to the time and manner of their framing, and to a reluctance to making any changes in their form afterwards.

The copy reads as follows:

On July 3d, 1886, I visited Professor W. Scheibner, at his rooms, in Leipsic, and obtained from him the following information concerning Professor Zoellner's Spiritistic experiments with Dr. Henry Slade, the American Medium:

1. Professor Scheibner thinks that he was present at three or four of the regular séances with Slade. Slade came to Professor Zoellner's rooms; they sat around a table for perhaps half an hour, and then, after the séance was over, they spent an hour or two sitting informally in the same room, or in the next room, and talking. During these informal conversations surprising things would occur. Raps would now and then be heard, and objects would unexpectedly be thrown about the room. In these conversations Professor Scheibner was present perhaps five or six times. Some of these took place during the day, and some in the evening.

2. Professor Scheibner said that each single thing that he saw might possibly have been jugglery, "although he perceived nothing that raised a direct suspicion."

The whole number of incidents taken together, however, surprised him, and seemed scarcely explicable as jugglery, for there did not seem to be the necessary time or means for preparing so many tricks, "which often connected themselves surprisingly with desires casually expressed in momentary conversations."

Professor Scheibner said, however, that he did not regard himself as competent to form an opinion which should have scientific weight, because:

(*a*) He knows nothing about jugglery;

(*b*) He was merely a passive spectator, and could not, properly speaking, make observations—could not suggest conditions, "or gain the control which seemed necessary;" and

(*c*) He is short-sighted, "and might easily have left unnoticed something essential."

He says merely, that to him, *subjectively*, jugglery did not seem a good "or sufficient" explanation of the phenomena.

3. Professor Scheibner said that he had never seen anything of the kind before. He had never even, since his childhood, seen any exhibitions of jugglery; he does not go to see such things, because he is so short-sighted that if he went he would see nothing. In this connection he repeated his statement that from this, among other causes, he did not regard himself as competent to give an opinion. He said that many persons in Germany had demanded his opinion, but that he had refused it because he regarded his subjective impression, without objective proofs, as scientifically valueless.

4. Professor Scheibner said that he did not believe in these things before. He came to the séances because Professor Zoellner was a personal friend. He has seen very little of the sort since.

That little has been in the presence of a lady in Leipsic through whom raps occurred, and psychography. This last phenomenon consisted in communication through a little contrivance, furnished with an index or pointer, which answered questions by pointing to letters laid out before it. This it did when the lady placed her hand on the machine. The questions were "usually" not asked mentally, but spoken out. There were no tests applied to these phenomena, no conditions of exact investigation. Professor Scheibner "holds suspicion of conscious deception to be out of the question."

5. Professor Zoellner was, said Professor Scheibner, a man of keen

mind, but in his investigations apt to see "by preference" what lay in the path of his theory. He could "less easily" see what was against his theory. He was childlike and trustful in character, and might easily have been deceived by an impostor. He expected everyone to be honest and frank as he was. He started with the assumption that Slade meant to be honest with him. He would have thought it wrong to doubt Slade's honesty. Professor Zoellner, said Professor Scheibner, set out to find proof for four-dimentional space, in which he was already inclined to believe. His whole thought was directed to that point.

6. Professor Scheibner thinks that the mental disturbance under which Zoellner suffered later, might be regarded as, at this time, incipient. He became more and more given to fixing his attention on a few ideas, and incapable of seeing what was against them. Towards the last he was passionate when criticized. Professor Scheibner would not say that Professor Zoellner's mental disturbance was pronounced and full-formed, so to speak, but that it was incipient, and, if Zoellner had lived longer, would have fully developed. Zoellner himself, "whose brothers and sisters frequently* suffered from mental disease, often feared lest a similar fate should come upon him."

7. Professor Scheibner gives no opinion on Spiritism. He can only say that he cannot explain the phenomena that he saw.

8. Professor Weber, said Professor Scheibner, "attended the Zoellner-Slade experiments under the same circumstances as he (Scheibner) himself."

9. Professor Zoellner's book, said Professor Scheibner, would create the impression that Weber and Fechner and he agreed with Zoellner throughout in his opinion of the phenomena "and their interpretation;" but this, he said, is not the case.

HALLE a. S., *July 5th*, 1886.

So much for the information given by Professor Scheibner. It now remained to see Professor Wilhelm Weber, and on the evening of July 12th I called upon him at his house in Goettingen. Of his statements I took notes during my conversation with him, as in the former instances, and copied and arranged them the same evening at my hotel. Professor Weber is now eighty-three years old, and does not lecture. He is extremely excitable and somewhat incoherent when excited. I found it difficult to induce him to talk slowly enough, and systematically enough, for me to make my notes. Professor Weber said:

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* "Dessen Geschwister mehrfach" etc.—the words may be taken in two senses.

1. That he thought the things he saw in the séances with Slade were different from jugglery.

2. That he did not think there was time or opportunity for Slade to prepare deceptions.

3. That he himself knew nothing of jugglery, nor did Professor Zoellner.

4. That he can testify to the *facts* as described by Zoellner, and that he could not himself have described the occurrences better than they are described in Zoellner's book:—to the *facts* he is willing to testify, the *means* he declares unknown to him, but does not regard jugglery as a sufficient explanation. If another can understand, he said, how jugglery can explain the facts, well and good—he can not.

5. That he had never seen anything of the kind before, and has not since; it being his only experience of Spiritualism.

6. That he had the greatest freedom to experiment and set conditions, and that the conditions were favorable to observation.

7. That he regarded Professor Fechner as one of the best observers in the world, and Professor Scheibner as an excellent observer.

8. That Professor Zoellner *was not* at that time, in any sense, in an abnormal mental condition.

Professor Weber seemed unwilling to speak decidedly on the subject, but showed that he leaned to the Spiritistic interpretation of the facts. He said that the things done indicated intelligence on the part of the doer.

Having now before us the testimony given by these survivors of the famous investigation, I will collect briefly the facts relating to each of those concerned—adding in one or two cases from other sources—and point out the nature and value of their testimony to the occurrences recorded by Professor Zoellner.

1. As to Professor Wundt, who is by profession an experimental psychologist, and an observer. Professor Wundt did not regard the investigation, so far as he participated, as in any respect thorough or satisfactory. The conditions of observation were not present. When called upon by Professor Ulrici to describe the occurrences as he saw them, he said he would not willingly describe what he had not had opportunity to observe.

2. As to Professor Zoellner, the chief witness and author of the book published, a number of points are worthy of note.

(1.) The question of his mental condition at the time of the investigation. It is asserted by Baron Hellenbach (see *Geburt und Tod* etc., Wien, 1885, S. 96) that Zoellner was of sound mind up to his death.

The statement should have due weight, but the author's general attitude towards Spiritism should not be overlooked. I do not consider his testimony for Zoellner's sanity as good as that of Fechner or Scheibner against. Of the four men mentioned as connected with him, Wundt, Weber, Fechner and Scheibner, three (all except Weber) are decidedly of the opinion that his mental condition was not normal. The opinion of Wundt, as of a man whose profession would not permit him to speak hastily upon this topic, I would regard as of special value; but if we rule that out upon the ground that Wundt was not impressed by the investigation, and might naturally be inclined to underrate Zoellner, who was, we have left the opinions of Fechner and Scheibner, both Zoellner's colleagues at Leipsic, both particular friends of Zoellner, and both inclined to agree with him as to the reality of the facts he describes. Both of them regarded Zoellner at the time as of more or less unsound mind. His disease, as described by them, seems to have been chiefly emotional, showing itself in a passionate dislike of contradiction, and a tendency to overlook any evidence contrary to a cherished theory.

To the general change in his nature due to his disease Professor Scheibner testifies; and Professor Fechner's belief as to his mental condition is specially worthy of note from the fact that, although recognizing it to be abnormal, he still holds his powers of observation to be sound, and upon this ground is inclined to assent to the facts described. If anyone could be tempted to make Zoellner as sane as possible, it would be one in the position of Professor Fechner. Professor Weber's testimony I will examine later. Upon the question whether the peculiar form of Zoellner's disease would be likely to affect his powers of observation, the following points may throw some light.

(2.) It is evident, both from what Zoellner has himself printed and from what Professor Scheibner has said, that Zoellner's interest in the investigation centered in his attempt to prove experimentally what he already held to be speculatively true as to a fourth dimension of space. In a paper published in the *Quarterly Journal of Science*, for April, 1878, he says:

"At the end of my first treatise, already finished in manuscript in the course of August, 1877, I called attention to the circumstance that a certain number of physical phenomena, which, by 'synthetical conclusions *à priori*,' might be explained through the generalized conception of space and the platonic hypothesis of projection, coincided with so-called Spiritualistic phenomena. Cautiously, however, I said:—'To those of my readers who are inclined to see in Spiritualistic phenomena

an *empirical* confirmation of those phenomena above deduced in regard to their *theoretical* possibility, I beg to observe that from the point of view of idealism there must first be given a precise definition and criticism of *objective reality,'* " etc. Now this reference to Spiritualistic phenomena was made before Zoellner had seen anything of the kind, and his attitude was evidently a receptive one. Moreover, we have Professor Scheibner's testimony to the fact that during the whole investigation his attention was entirely directed towards the subject of the fourth dimension, and an experimental demonstration of its existence. Bearing in mind, therefore, the mental attitude in which, and the object with which, Zoellner approached this investigation, we cannot look upon any subjective, or emotional, mental disturbance, which results, as described, in making him narrow his attention more and more upon a few ideas, and disregard or find it difficult to observe what seems contrary to them, as without objective significance, particularly where we know the man to be a total stranger to investigations of such a nature as this one, and not only quite ignorant as to possible methods of deception, but unwilling to doubt the integrity of the Medium.

(3.) There are things in Zoellner's own accounts which indicate a certain lack of caution and accuracy on his part, and tend to lessen one's confidence in his statements. As an instance of inaccuracy, I may mention the statement he makes in his article in the *Quarterly Journal of Science* as to the opinions of his colleagues. Professor Zoellner says:

"I reserve to later publication, in my own treatises, the description of further experiments obtained by me in twelve séances with Mr. Slade, and, as I am expressly authorized to mention, in the presence of my friends and colleagues, Professor Fechner, Professor Wilhelm Weber, the celebrated electrician from Goettingen, and Herr Scheibner, Professor of Mathematics in the University of Leipsic, who are *perfectly* convinced of the reality of the observed facts, altogether excluding imposture or prestidigitation."

Here the attitude of the four men is not correctly described, and Professor Zoellner's statement does them injustice, as Professor Scheibner remarked. At least two of the men were merely *inclined* to accept the facts, and to these two the words "*perfectly* convinced" will not apply.

As one out of numerous instances of lack of caution, I may refer to Zoellner's statements, that at certain times writing was heard upon the slates, giving no proof whatever to show that the writing was really

done at the time of hearing the sounds, and apparently quite ignorant of the fact that deception may readily be practiced on this point.

3. As to Professor Fechner. The fact is admitted that he was, at the time of the investigation, suffering from cataract, which made all observation extremely defective. Moreover, he was present at but two of the sittings, and has stated that he did not regard these as very decisive. His attitude towards the phenomena described is based on his faith in Professor Zoellner's powers of observation, and not on what he saw himself. He does not, therefore, as an independent witness would, add anything to the force of Professor Zoellner's testimony.

4. As to Professor Scheibner. His position is simply that he cannot see how the whole series of phenomena can reasonably be attributed to jugglery, though he admits that each single thing he saw, alone considered, might possibly be. He does not regard himself, however, as able to give an opinion which should have objective value; because he was merely a passive spectator, and could not, properly speaking, make observations—could not suggest conditions,—because he knows absolutely nothing about jugglery, and the possibilities of deception, and because he is so short-sighted that he may easily have overlooked something of importance—so short-sighted that he never goes to see a juggler, because he sees nothing.

5. As to the last witness, Professor Weber, his testimony agrees more decidedly with that of Professor Zoellner. He was present at eight séances, declares the occurrences to have been as represented by Professor Zoellner, and denies that Zoellner was in any sense insane. But Professor Weber is from Goettingen, and was at the time of the investigation in Leipsic on a visit; it is not improbable that those of Professor Zoellner's colleagues, who lived and worked at the same University with him, may have had better opportunities for judging as to his mental condition than one who only saw him occasionally. Moreover, Professor Weber's opinion as to the qualifications of the men with whom he was associated does not seem to have been always sound. One who could look upon Professor Fechner as one of the best observers in the world, and Professor Scheibner, as for the purpose in hand, an excellent observer, neglecting entirely to note that one was partly blind and that the other could not see well, might readily overlook the fact of a not very pronounced mental aberration on the part of a third person. And as to Professor Weber's opinion of the phenomena, it is well to note that Professor Weber was seventy-four years old at the time, had had no previous experience in investigations of this kind and was quite ignorant of the arts of the juggler. Whatever may be

a man's powers of reflection at seventy-four, it is natural to suppose that his powers of perception, especially when exercised in a quite new field, are not at that age what they were some years previously.

Summary.

Thus it would appear that of the four eminent men whose names have made famous the investigation, there is reason to believe one, *Zoellner*, was of unsound mind at the time, and anxious for experimental verification of an already accepted hypothesis; another, *Fechner*, was partly blind, and believed because of Zoellner's observations; a third, *Scheibner*, was also afflicted with defective vision, and not entirely satisfied in his own mind as to the phenomena; and a fourth, *Weber*, was advanced in age, and did not even recognize the disabilities of his associates. No one of these men had ever had experiences of this sort before, nor was any one of them acquainted with the ordinary possibilities of deception. The experience of our Commission with Dr. Slade would suggest, that the lack of such knowledge on their part was unfortunate.

A consideration of all these circumstances places, it seems to me, this famous investigation in a somewhat new light, and any estimate of Zoellner's testimony, based merely upon the eminence in science of his name and those of his collaborateurs, neglecting to give attention to their disqualifications for this kind of work, cannot be a fair or a true estimate.

In concluding this Report, I give sincere thanks to all of these gentlemen for their courtesy and frankness—a frankness which has alone made it possible for me to collect this evidence; and which, considering the nature of the evidence, must be regarded as most generous. To Professor Scheibner, especially, my thanks are due for the trouble he has taken in helping me to make my notes exact and truthful.

Geo. S. Fullerton.

Dr. Knerr.

In 1884 rumors reached me of remarkable Spiritual communications from a revered friend and relative, Dr. Hering. These communications had come through a slate-writing Medium by the name of Patterson, and were received by two gentlemen whose names I am not at liberty to mention, but whom I will call A. and B. Both were prominent men, and both had become thorough believers in Spiritualism after several sittings with Mrs. Patterson. A. claimed to have received personal benefit from medicines thus prescribed, and learned the circumstances of his son's death which had occurred in some mysterious manner far away from home. B. has since died, and communications under his signature have come through this same Medium.

The manifestations in this province of Spiritualism, Independent Slate-Writing, would seem to be of a nature more tangible and direct than those of so-called Materializing or Trance Mediums, and, therefore, in this instance I determined to test to the utmost what had been reported to me concerning communications from one who stood so near in life.

Although I received a number of messages at my first visit, written in pencil, in many different handwritings, which the Medium alleged were written by Spirit-control of her hand, I received but one or two in the slate. The slate was a small double slate, joined together with hinges, about 10 inches by 12 inches in dimension. Inside of the slates, written on a slip of paper, carefully folded, I placed the question "Can I obtain a communication from Dr. Hering which will be characteristic of himself?" A small piece of slate pencil chipped from an ordinary pencil, perhaps an eighth of an inch long, was placed within the slates, together with the written question. The slates were then tightly screwed together at the open end, by myself, with the blade of an old knife which was at hand to serve the purpose of a screw-driver. It was then placed by the Medium in her lap, under the table, one hand, the left, resting upon the slate, the other hand remaining on top of the table, writing, with a lead pencil, messages in different handwritings, on paper.

These messages came in characters bold as John Hancock's, and in chirography as small and neat as the writing of Charlotte Bronté, whose manuscript the compositor is said to have deciphered with the aid of a magnifying glass; and between these extremes were a dozen or more styles as varied and marked as one could wish. The purport of these messages, which were written rather quickly, and without perceptible

thought or hesitation, changing from one handwriting to another without the least apparent difficulty, was in some instances the veriest twaddle, while others contained tolerably good sense, even in language rather above the Medium, unless appearances were misleading, for she looked the embodiment of ignorant simplicity, and spoke far from grammatically.

The table at which we sat was a very ordinary little sewing-table, without any drawer or compartment, and before sitting down I examined it top and bottom, a privilege freely accorded. We had sat about ten minutes when the Medium brought up the slate with the little piece of pencil, which I had scratched with a knife for identification, lying on top of the slate. The screw was in its place, seemingly as I had put it. I was requested to remove the screw, which I did, and found written across the inside surface of one of the slates the words "I will try to accede to your wish," signed with the initials of my departed friend, to whose handwriting it was not dissimilar. I was much puzzled by this answer, I confess, and immediately placed within the slates another question, this time addressed to the name of another deceased friend. Again I screwed up the slates with my own hand, and kept my eyes riveted on the hands of the Medium as well as my position would permit, without getting up and bending over the table. I did not have long to wait before an answer came as before, again signed with the initials of the person addressed. How the writing came in the slate I could not surmise.

The following are specimens of the communications which were written by the Medium's controlled, possibly self-controlled, free, right hand, at my first visit:—

(In a fine, light, legible hand.)

Cannot say wether we can control the slate or no. will do our utmost to do so there are times when we cannot get the proper influences nor find the right conditions. C HERING

(In a close, heavy hand.)

we have quite as much power over you as over any other medium, mediumistic forces are not confined to a few, but exist to some extent in all. be patient we will do what we can. H

(In a sprawling back hand, the same as a subsequent one, signed Thomas Lister.)

The friend you have asked for is here and will do what he can to comply with your wish it is not necessary that you should sit with

any medium to convince yourself of this truth you have enough of this power to get almost any sort of manifestations you should ask for they will develope without any effort on your part but you can materially assist them T L

(In a neat and precise feminine hand.)

There stands by thy chair a venerable man who had passed through many years of work in his profession on the earth plane hé is one that doth influence and impress thee to do many things when in the body was a phisician of the homeopathic school he sayeth that he doth feel the same interest in the progruss of the medical fraternity as when in the body. appeareth to be one of strict integrity and ranked high as a thinker thou hast many years to stay in the form and through thee a work will be completed that none other can do

L MOTT

(In a small, rather indistinct feminine hand.)

I dont think the doctors knew what my trouble was. I know if doctor Hering or Raue had treated my case I would still be in my body but its no difference as far as I am concerned I have found this life far the best leaving my mother was hard, but now I know how to get back to her I am content C S Clara Swencke

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(In a plain masculine hand.)

if you prepare a slate the doctor will give you a message on it in his own handwrite and one characteristic of him E S W

(In a small, rather illegible hand.)

My friend Tiedemann made a mistake in the medicine he prepared for me he never for a moment thought it would prove anything but a help but it had the effect of sending me to the higher life

W MORWITZER

(In a large, generous, open hand.)

Yea if thee dost fix a slate so as to satisfy thyself thy friend will write on it and give thee a description of his birth into everlasting life

ELIAS HICKS

(In a very indistinct feminine hand.)

cannot say wether we can procure the presence of any one just now that can write music were it possible to have any one conversant with it they could not only write one but many notes for you

(Signature indistinct.)

(In a small, cramped hand of almost microscopic fineness supposed to be Charlotte Brontë, and occupying but very little more space than on this printed page.

The future holds much for you of success, the later portion of this and the whole of the next will be filled with prosperity you have a band of the more advanced spirits about you and were you to follow your first impressions you would never fail in your judgment C B

(In a clear scholarly hand.)

a man of few words when in the body I still have the same peculiarities will with your permission become one of your guiding band

ABERNETHY

(In a bold masculine hand).

Sit for ten or fifteen minuets two evenings in the week and thus help perfect the powerful gifts you have. through them you can do much good both for others and yourself T N

(In the same hand as a preceding communication signed T L.)

Be patient; the party that wrote on the slate before is trying to do it over we sometimes have a difficulty in doing this

T LISTER

(In a slow, labored, uncouth hand.)

I know one thing and that is that they didn't make any headway in killing me when they hung me nor even when they scooped my brains out afterward—damn the doctors—damn the preachers—I hate them all they lied to me preachers priests and all they told me it was all right but I have found out its all wrong. I havent seen Mrs Reed nor do I want to I never was sorry that I killed her, it don't make a saint out of a man to send him out the way I had to go—its only killing—they were as bad as I was—I cant see—its dark

MC GINNIS.*

(In an ordinary feminine hand.)

Put a piece of paper on a stand place a pencil on it and I will try to make the scale for you at home there is a power that is growing on you that will enable me to do this in a few times of trying I could write my own hand this is my first time of coming here so that makes it harder for me to get control B

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* McGinnis was a murderer recently hung for the brutal killing of his mother-in-law. Particulars of the murder, execution and autopsy were in all the local papers.

(This doggerel came in answer to a question whether the Spirits could write poetry, and is in a hand not dissimilar to the preceding communication, although the signatures differ.)

When the clear bright sun was shining
Then they took my cherished form
And they bore it to the church yard
To consign it to the worm

Well no matter that was only
The clay dress your loved one wore
God had robed her for an angel
She had need of this no more

Though the tears fell fast and faster
Yet you would not call me back
Nay be glad her feet no longer
Tread life's rough and thorny track

Yes be glad the father took her
Took her whilst her heart was pure
Oh be glad he did not leave her
All life's trials to endure

A C

(In a sprawling hand.)

Your friend has lost the Control I cannot say wether it will be possible to regain it now or no I find it hard work to get any hold at all.

A M

(Each letter distinct, as a child would print the alphabet.)

Chief there cant come any answer the magnetic current is broken for want of power we go now but will come in your own wigwam

HOWONDO

At the following séances I received slate writings repeatedly. Sometimes the slate would scarcely be in the Medium's hands before a message appeared, each time with the little pencil on top. I was told that I was an excellent Medium, that, if I cultivated the faculty, would soon myself be able to obtain these slate writings. I was also asked to prepare a slate secured in any way I wished, and had the promise that a message would be written within it. I acceded to the request and took a slate of my own, tied it up in every direction with twine, and

put my private seal upon it in several places where I had knotted the string. This slate the Spirits could not overcome. I never received the promised message. I never even had the slate returned to me. After remaining in the Medium's possession for several months, she having changed her residence in the meantime, she told me the slate had disappeared and somehow must have gotten lost in moving. At any rate the slate had been spirited away somehow. I will here mention that at about the third or fourth sitting I asked permission to watch the slate while it was under the table, which was freely granted, but on this occasion, and whenever I did so, there were no results.

On one occasion we took the trouble to bring Mrs. Patterson to a room in the house of our departed friend. She was here among a small circle of intimate friends and members of the family, some inclined to belief and others skeptics. She failed utterly to obtain as much as even a scratch inside of the slates, although communications on paper came thick and fast. I may mention that on this occasion several persons sat with the slate continually in full view.

I had almost decided to drop Mrs. Patterson and her slate writing, although reluctant to do so, because I had no certain and positive evidence of fraud with which to confront my friend, who was getting impatient at my slowness in accepting all I had seen, when I resolved to push my investigations to a point of certainty, one way or another, and hit upon the little scheme of going prepared, at my next visit to Mrs. Patterson, with a mirror in my pocket which I could hold under the table at an angle that would reflect whatever occurred on the other side of the table, in the Medium's lap, the accustomed position of the mysterious slate. The sitting was held in broad daylight, and the table was so placed that the Medium was seated with her back to a window, affording sufficient light for the experiment. I purposely avoided removing my overcoat on this day, because I wished to hide my movements as much as possible, and sat down at my side of the table with considerable misgiving as to the result of taking liberties with the Spirits. The Medium this time had on her table a new slate, a larger one, one which she said had belonged to the celebrated Slade who had himself received messages on it. She said her old slate was broken, which was probably true; when I had last seen it it was in a battered condition. She asked if it would make any difference to me if she used the new slate. The only apparent difference between the slates was that this one was larger and did not close with a screw, therefore, thought I, more easily manipulated; consequently I did not withhold my consent. I wrote upon a slip of paper my question, "Will Dr. H. advise

me what to do for Juliet (an old colored patient)?" I folded over the slip of paper five times, put it in the slate with a small stub of pencil, and down the slates went into the lap of the Medium where I could see them, lying plainly reflected in my little mirror which I had slipped out of my pocket and laid across my knees at the proper angle of reflection.

Mrs. Patterson first wrote a letter-sheet full of alleged Spirit communications, and handed them to me across the table for perusal. I took the sheet with one hand and while ostensibly scanning the written page, with the other hand I carefully adjusted my little mirror, on which my downcast and watchful eyes were fixed, when lo! in the mirror *I beheld a hand*, closely resembling that of the Medium, *stealthily insert its fingers between the leaves of the slate, take out the little slip, unfold and again fold it, grasp the little pencil*, which had rolled to the front while the slate was tilted that way, *and with rapid but noiseless motion* (had there been the least noise from the pencil, it would have been drowned by the fit of coughing, which, at that instant, seized the Medium) *write across the slate from left to right, a few lines; then the leaves of the slate were closed, the little pencil laid on the top*, and, over all, two hands were folded as if in benediction. The woman opposite me, to whom the hands belonged (unless they were Spirit hands) sat with uplifted eyes, a calm expression of innocence upon her face. After holding the slates so for a moment or two, and after calling to the Spirit friends "to come and *please* write in the slate," she produced them, saying, "It has come!"

Of course, I did all I could to master my indignation, which, at that moment, was extreme, and quietly opening the slates, I read the message pretending to have come from high authority, "The channels are obstructed, give Arsenic, Bryonia and Pulsatilla in succeeding doses, an hour apart!" The last words were somewhat illegible, and Mrs. Patterson suggested another trial; she thought the Spirits would write it plainer. Again the slates went down; *again I saw the hand at work as before.* This second time the hurriedly written message was not much plainer than the first. Mrs. Patterson, who was better versed in deciphering Spirit dispatches than I, offered to read it for me, but remembering that "all good things are three," I requested a third trial. After this last experiment, in which again, *for the third time, in my little mirror, I saw the stealthy fingers write on the slate,* I told the Medium I was satisfied, smothered my indignant anger, and left the house as quickly as I could. For the larger part of a year I had investigated in good faith this department of Spiritualism, which, in this Medium's case, had turned out a downright fraud.

Not long after my last interview with Mrs. Patterson it was my good fortune to meet with an *unprofessional* Medium, a young gentleman of reputed honor and veracity, to whom I was introduced by a friend who had known him from childhood, and vouched for his honesty. This young man's Mediumistic abilities had begun to develop with the planchette, and had reached the stage in which a drum and sundry musical instruments were played behind a curtain where he sat entranced, with his hands tightly bound together by a handkerchief or cord. These séances were continued with regularity on certain nights in the week, and were confined strictly to the family circle and to a few privileged friends. There was, therefore, no temptation to deceive for gain. I came into the circle as an observer, not as believer, but was impressed by the phenomena witnessed at the first séance in which the Medium was under Indian control. There were strange sounds, guttural tones and whoops which really might have emanated from a wild son of the forest. A drum, an accordion, a zither, a mouth-organ were all played upon. The drumsticks kept time to music, rapped on the wall, appeared above the edge of the curtain several times, brightly illuminated, as if dipped in electric light or some phosphorescent substance. As I have said, I was impressed, and might have ended in complete conversion, by manifestations from so trustworthy a source, and vouched for in such perfect sincerity, had it not, in an unlucky moment, occurred to me to apply a little harmless test.

The test consisted simply in putting a dab of printer's ink on one of the drumsticks at the very last moment before the séance began. The result could not prove physically injurious to the Medium, who had challenged investigation, nor to any one in the circle. The result was startling. Being accorded the privilege of tying the Medium's hands, I proceeded to do so with a stout cord, using a certain knot which I believe has never been known to slip or come undone. This accomplished, and while some one else fastened the Medium securely to his chair, with his back to the instruments on the table, the ink, concealed in a pocket-handkerchief, was applied. In this position we left the Medium, the lights were lowered and the music began. Soon were heard the deep breathings preceding the trance, then the 'Indian' began to manifest, at first somewhat sullenly, as if not pleased with the conditions, some of the instruments sounded, and at last the drumsticks began their tattoo. At the close of the séance, when the curtains were drawn and the lights turned up, the Medium was found in his chair with his hands still tied, but great was the astonish-

ment of everyone present at the marvelous condition of the Medium's hands. How in the world printer's ink could have gotten smeared over them while under control of 'Deerfoot, the Indian,' no one, not even the Medium, could fathom.

I believe there is an explanation for these or similar phenomena, but I must leave it to the ingenious and adroit expounders of Spiritualist philosophy.

CALVIN B. KNERR.

MEDIUMISTIC DEVELOPMENT.

At my very first séance, as a member of this Commission, I was told by the Spirit of Elias Hicks, through Mrs. Patterson, that I was gifted by nature with great Mediumistic power. Another Medium, with whom I had a session shortly afterwards (I cannot remember his name, but he advertised himself as a great 'Australian Medium'), professed himself quite unable to exert any power in the presence of a Medium so much more powerful than himself. 'Father Holland,' the control of Mrs. Williams, in New York, assured me that I merely needed development to have Spiritual manifestations at my own home; and Joseph Caffray was so emphatic in his assertions of my extraordinary Spiritual capabilities, that I began to think that it was my duty to quicken these dormant powers and not to let them 'fust in me unused,' and if successful, when I had become fully 'developed,' I could offer myself to my fellow Commissioners as a *corpus vile* on which every experiment could be made, and at a great saving of expense.

Spiritualists constantly reproach investigators of Spiritualism with faint-heartedness and lack of patience; they allege that at the very first rebuff all investigating ardor cools, and that one failure is deemed sufficient to condemn a whole system.

If the case be really thus, the Spiritualists have a show of reason for this objection, and it behooves the Seybert Commission to give no ground for it.

After much deliberation I decided to put myself in the hands of Caffray for 'development.' I preferred this Medium, first, because he was the most emphatic of all in his assertion of my almost unrivaled Mediumistic powers, and in his confidence that indications of Spiritual growth would be manifest in three or four weeks, and at the end of six weeks or of two months I might celebrate my Spiritual majority by slatefuls of messages; and, secondly, Mr. Hazard assured me again and again that Caffray was the 'greatest Medium in the country;' and did not Mr. Hazard, by way of proof, show me a stoppered vial containing a card, on which, through Caffray's Mediumship, a message had been written while the closed vial was fast held in his closed hand?

The first step was the purchase of two slates from Caffray, for which I gave him several dollars. They were common enough to look at, but ah! they had been for months in his Materializing Cabinet and had

absorbed Spiritual power to the point of saturation, and fairly exuded it. I brought them carefully from New York, and folded them in black muslin, and laid them away in a dark drawer.

Caffray told me that with a beginner the Spirits found it somewhat easier to write with French chalk than with slate pencil. So I bought a box of a dozen pieces, such as tailors use.

The instructions which I received from Caffray were to keep these slates carefully in the dark, and every evening at about the same hour to sit in total darkness, with my hands resting on them for about a half or three-quarters of an hour; to maintain a calm, equable, passive state of mind, even to think of any indifferent subject rather than to concentrate my thoughts too intently on the slate-writing. There could be no question of the result. A Medium of my unusual and excessive power would find, at the end of three weeks, faint zig-zag scratches within the closed slates, and these scratches would gradually assume shape, until at last messages would be legible, probably at the end of six weeks, or of three months at the very farthest.

In addition to this, I must wear, night and day, a piece of magnetized paper, about six inches square, a fresh piece every night and morning; its magnetism was exhausted in about twelve hours. When I mentioned to Mr. Hazard the proposed use of this magnetized paper, he assured me that it was a capital idea—that he had himself used it for a headache, and when he put it on the top of his head 'it turned all his hair backward.' I confess to dismay when I heard this; Caffray had told me that I must wear this paper on the top of my head under my hat! But did it not behoove the Acting Chairman of the Seybert Commission to yield himself a willing victim to the cause of Psychical Research? Was to be, or not to be, a Medium so evenly balanced that the turning of a hair, or of a whole head of hair was to repel me? Perish the thought! That paper should be worn on the top of my head, under my hat, and that hat should be worn all day long. I would eat my breakfast with that hat on, eat my dinner with that hat on, and sleep with that hat on, and that magnetized paper should remain on the top of my head, let it turn my hair to all the points of the compass, if it would!

When I received the slates from Caffray he had no paper that was sufficiently magnetized just then; he had some sheets that were about half done, and promised to send them to me as soon as the process was complete.

In the meantime I began with the slates, sitting with them in total darkness from about a quarter past eight to nine o'clock every evening, with my hands resting on them lightly.

In three or four days the paper arrived. I explained to my family that hereafter they must not infer, from the wearing of my hat indoors and at meals, either that my wits had slipped, or that I had become converted to Judaism, but that my conduct was to be viewed by the light of the pure flame of research. In my secret soul I resolved that I would go at once, that very morning, to New York and plead with Caffray for some slight easing of my ordeal. The 'Spectre of the Threshold' appeared to wear a silk hat, and I was afraid I never, never should pass him.

The magnetized paper I handled with awe. It was, in outward semblance, ordinary white blotting paper, and, from some faint indications of ink here and there, looked as though it might on occasion have served its original use; but had I not paid a dollar a sheet for it? It must be good.

As I started for the train I put a piece on the top of my head, gave a fond, farewell look at my hair, and planted my hat firmly on my brows. I reached the train, and while looking for a seat caught sight of my friend, Miss W——. Of course, I instantly bowed, and instantly there came fluttering down before her astonished and bewildered eyes a piece of blotting paper. I snatched it hastily, and in terror lest I had already broken the charm and forfeited all chance of Mediumship, retired to the rear of the car and furtively replaced the precious pad. Decidedly I must see Caffray at once.

Luckily, when I reached New York I found that eminent Medium at home, and, 'bonneted,' rehearsed to him my dread anticipations. He could not repress a grim laugh, and to my inexpressible relief gave me permission to wear the paper suspended round my neck next the skin.

With those precious slates I sat every night, at the same hour, in darkness. I allowed nothing to interfere with this duty; no call of family, of friends, of society, was heeded. At the end of three weeks I searched every molecule of the slate for the indication of a zig-zag line, but the surface was unsullied, and its black monotony returned stare for stare.

Still hopeful and trustful I continued, day by day and week by week. The six weeks expired. Not a zig, nor a zag. Caffray was kept busy magnetizing paper. I renewed my stock and determined to push on to two months. I moved to the country and carried my slates thither, wrapped in double folds of black muslin. The days and weeks rolled on. Two months passed. The slates were as clean as when they came into my possession. I would go on to three months.

Does not a hen sit for three weeks? Where a hen gives a week, shall not I give a month? Is not a Medium worth more than a chicken?

'Courage!' cried Caffray, with each batch of paper. I went to the seashore and my slates went with me. Not a single evening did I break my rule.

And so it went on. The three months became four; became five; became six!

And there an end, with absolutely virgin slates.

I had used enough blotting paper, it seemed to me, to absorb a spot on the sun. I dare not calculate the number of hours I had spent in darkness.

Let Spiritualistic reproaches of investigators for lack of zeal and patience be heaped up hereafter till 'Ossa becomes a wart;' I care not; my withers are unwrung.

Punch gives a receipt for making 'Gooseberry Fool:' 'Carefully skin your gooseberries, extract the seeds and wash the pulp in three waters for six hours each. Having done this with the gooseberries, the Fool is perfect.'

HORACE HOWARD FURNESS.

SEALED LETTERS.

Readers of the Spiritualistic literature of the present day cannot fail to have their attention frequently called to the remarkable power attributed to certain Mediums, not only of reading the contents of envelopes which are securely gummed and sealed, but of returning to the questions therein contained pertinent answers from friends in the other world. It is far from uncommon to hear of conversions to faith in Spiritualism wrought by these remarkable proofs of Spiritual power. At this hour, in many a loving home, responses to letters, thus sealed and answered through these Mediums, are treasured as tenderest, completest proofs that love survives the grave and still encircles the living and the dead.

Recognizing in this phase of Mediumship a department of Spiritualism capable of plain, matter-of-fact investigation, which could be conducted in writing and demanding no special powers of observation, the duty of investigation devolved mainly upon the Acting Chairman.

There are only four of these special Mediums whose advertisements I have seen in Spiritual papers. He who has probably the widest reputation is Dr. James V. Mansfield, Boston. A second is Mr. R. W. Flint, New York City. A third is Mrs. Dr. Eleanor Martin, Columbus, Ohio; and lastly, also of the same name, Mrs. Eliza A. Martin, of Oxford, Massachusetts.

Through the Mediumship of the first, I have seen it stated that upward of a hundred thousand securely sealed letters have been answered; and the names of men high in our business and financial world have been cited to me as of those who had received proofs of his power which could not be questioned, nor explained on any other ground than that of clairvoyance, or of Spirit communication. To him, therefore, I concluded to apply first.

The choice of a subject whereon to communicate with a denizen of the other world is not easy. To follow in the well-trodden path and ask after the welfare of departed friends would only end, I well knew, in turning on that stream of generalities, not glittering, but very dull, in which a large experience had taught me that disembodied Spirits chiefly delight when expatiating on the conditions of their changed existence. Furthermore, it was desirable that from the investigation should be eliminated all elements of thought-transference or of

mind-reading. I must select a subject on which my own mind was a blank, and where the responses would have to be definite and unambiguous, and withal quite within the scope of Spiritual knowledge.

At last, as fulfilling, in all honesty and sincerity, the requisite conditions, a skull in my possession was fixed on.

This skull is a relic, interesting from its dramatic associations. It has been used for fifty or sixty years as a 'property' at the Walnut Street Theatre, whenever 'Hamlet' has been performed, and as 'Yorick's skull' has been handled in that play, from Edmund Kean down to Henry Irving and Edwin Booth. It is preserved with care, and mounted on a piece of polished black marble. Surely here is a skull whose experiences are singular above all ordinary skulls, and in whose career its original owner might be not unreasonably expected to cherish some interest or to have followed its fortunes with some little attention. Untold possibilities for the vindication of Spiritualistic truth and power hang around it, should there be an unwavering agreement by all Spiritual authorities, as to the circumstances, when alive, of its original owner. Surely, I concluded, the translated inhabitants of the 'summer-land' cannot have doffed the homespun honesty of mortal life; all will either confess ignorance with regard to this skull, or display their truthfulness by a substantial harmony in their reports, and thereby furnish an indisputable, irrefragable proof of the truth of Spiritualism.

Sincere in this trust, I wrote on a small sheet of paper this question: "What was the name, age, sex, color or condition in life of the owner, when alive, of the skull here in my library? 28 February, 1885." This paper was put in an envelope, whereof the flap was then gummed to within a small distance of the point, under this point some sealing-wax was dropped, and enough was added above it to form a large, heavy, substantial impression. At the four corners additional seals, with different impressions, were placed. Thus gummed, and sealed with five seals, the envelope was enclosed to Dr. J. V. Mansfield, with a request that it be subjected to his Mediumistic power.

In a few days the following was received:

'Boston, March 2d, 1885.

Dear Furness.—Your package came duly to hand most respectfully say I have given the package two sittings and re'd from two different spirits (purported) answer one coroberating [*sic*] the other statement One from Robt Hair [*sic*] the other from Dr B. Rush for the two communicates my charge is 5.00 which if you will send me per

registered mail I will remit you per return mail Respfy J. V. Mansfield I judge from the com. it relates to a skeleton.'

With this letter the sealed envelope was returned, apparently in exactly the same state in which it had been sent; the seals were intact, with the exception perhaps of a few trifling fractures, for which the transit to and from Boston, through the mail, would readily account. Upon closer inspection, however, and upon turning the envelope so as to catch the light, I thought that a slight glazing of gum was discernible around the central seal, and from beneath its edge a minute bubble of mucilage protruded. The fee demanded was at once forwarded, and by return of mail the following 'communicates' were received, written in pencil on long strips of common paper, and in two different hands:

Dear Furness.—Yours of 28 Feby before me—as to this matter under consideration I have looked it over and over again Called my old friend Geo Combe and we are of the mind it is the skull of a female—Combe says he thinks it was that of a Colored woman—the age—about 40 to 44 the name of the one who inhabited it—it would not be possible for any spirit but the one who the skull belonged to If it was colored—Cornelia Winnie might know. Respfy Robt Hare Mch 2 '85.'

In a larger, bolder hand on the second slip was the following:

'My dear Townsman—pardon what may seem an intrusion—but seeing your anxiety to get the Aage [*sic*] sex—col and name of a skull in your office and seeing the conclusion that Dr. Hare and Proffr Combe have arrived at—I will say that I have looked the same over and fully concur in their conclusion save in the color of the one who once annimated [*sic*] that skull. Fowler Spurzeheim [*sic*] and Gall agree in saying that Hare and Combe have nothing to base an opinion upon, as to the color—yet in sex they agree Yours with Respect

Benja Rush M.D.

Exact age could not be determined. Mch 2 '85'

These answers are certainly remarkable. The very words of the question inside the sealed envelope are here openly repeated, and although the six eminent, scientific ghosts, Hare, Combe, Fowler, Spurzheim, Gall, and Rush do not agree with each other on all points, yet a slight divergence, or contrariety, in opinion is at times observable to the grosser eyes of flesh among doctors upon earth; and then they were all

in accord over the sex of the skull, in which problem, having one chance out of only two, they could not go very far afield. Moreover, the very framing of the question as to sex might suggest female, and as to color might suggest black.

But had not the envelope been opened?

It occurred to me to cut the edges of the sealed envelope carefully, whereby I could examine the flap, on the inside. It was done. The paper of the envelope under three of the seals was torn, and deception stood revealed. The seals had been cut out, and restored to their position with mucilage.

Although, in legal phrase, I might rest my case here, yet I was anxious so to seal an envelope that while its contents could not be extracted without the destruction of the envelope and a betrayal of any attempted fraud, yet that an answer to the question enclosed should be quite within the clairvoyant power, so called, of the Medium, if he really possessed any, and as to the existence whereof I was sincerely anxious to obtain some satisfactory proof. Animated with this desire, I proceeded as follows:

In the 'communicate' from the Spirit of Dr. Hare, reference is made to Cornelia Winnie's possible knowledge of the information which I was seeking in regard to the skull. Could this have been a lure to tempt me to knock again at the Spiritual door of which Dr. Mansfield is the porter?

At any rate I accepted the suggestion. On a sheet of note-paper I wrote:

'Can Cornelia Winnie, or any other Spirit (Dr. Hare refers me to the former), give me any particulars of the life or death of the colored woman who once animated this skull here in my Library. I am entirely ignorant myself on the subject.'

This was folded, placed in an envelope, gummed and sealed precisely as I had folded, gummed and sealed the previous letter. This I marked with ink on the outside 'No. 1.'

On another sheet of similar note-paper I repeated word for word, and line for line, and dot for dot, the very same question. This paper was also folded and put into an envelope, BUT two or three stitches of red silk were then passed through the flap of the envelope and the enclosed paper, sewing the two securely together; these stitches were made at the point of the flap, and again at each of the four corners. Over these stitches, and concealing them, seals of red sealing wax were affixed. Exteriorly the two envelopes were precisely alike. The stitched envelope was marked on the outside 'No. 2.' As the contents

of both were identical, a clairvoyant Spirit that could answer No. 1 could answer No. 2, but nothing less than superhuman power could extract the paper from No. 2 without so tearing the envelope as to betray an un-Spiritual origin. These two envelopes were enclosed to our Medium with the following note:

'Dear Doctor Mansfield. The answers to my sealed letter were so satisfactory and so very curious that I should like to follow up the interesting subject, if I am not taxing your powers too heavily. I therefore enclose two more sealed envelopes, marked No. 1 and No. 2. If it be possible, I should like to have you sit with No. 1 first. If the Spirits respond, pray send me word and let me know how much I am indebted to you.'

My object in asking the Medium to sit first with No. 1 was that, if he were fraudulent, finding the ease with which No. 1 could be opened, he would undertake the opening of No. 2 with such freedom and assurance that the envelope would be torn beyond the healing power of mucilage, and a confession of failure would have to follow.

In a few days the envelopes were returned with the following brief note:

'Dear Furness: Send you what came to your P K the 2d gave no response my terms are $3 for each trial—warrant nothing.

Respectfully,
J. V. M.'

The Spiritual communication enclosed reads as follows:

'I Bress de Lord for deh one mor to talk to de people of my ole home I been thar lots o tim since I com here—but o Lord de Massy—they no see *Winne* cos she be ded and she jus no ded at tall—now—as to dot Col gal—*Hed* I could not say—sure—but I think it Dinah Melish—she who lov de Lord too. I think it seem Dina top not. Will see Dina som time and then i ask her—do you no Minister Du Cachet well he here—and want the [there here follows in the original a rude drawing of a decanter and wine glass. In this scandalous allusion there is no trace, it will be observed, of phonetic spelling in the proper name] just de same. I Bress de Lor I don't want it.

March 13, '85. Cornelia Winnie.'

An examination of the envelope marked No. 1, by cutting it open at the edges, revealed the same story of fraud: three of the seals had been cut out, and replaced.

An examination of No. 2, in the same way, readily disclosed the

reason why the Spirits had failed to answer, although the question assuredly presented no greater difficulties than in No. 1. An attempt had been made to start two of the seals, but meeting with unexpected resistance in the silk stitches, and finding that further effort would end in tearing the envelope in a very palpable and mundane fashion, the Spirits had grown disheartened and taciturn.

We shall meet this Medium again, but for the present we will leave him, after pausing for a minute over his business card, which, after stating his terms in prosaic dollars and cents, thus apostrophizes his clientele:

> "From the bright stars,
> And viewless air
> Sweet Spirit, if thy home be there,
> Answer me.—Answer me."

Happily my experience enables me to remove all doubt as to the locality of the Spirit's 'home,' and to state with positiveness its exact location. But like the German philologist's example of the remarkable incongruity in English between spelling and pronunciation, that what was written 'Boz' was pronounced 'Charles Dickens,' so I cheerfully add to this list of incongruities that what is written 'bright stars' is pronounced 'Boston,' and 'viewless air' is pronounced 'Dartmouth Street.'

I next turned my attention to Mr. R. W. Flint in New York. From him I received the following circular in answer to my inquiries:

"DEAR

I am controlled by one spirit, purporting to be my guide who is the scribe for the spirits, delivering (in his own hand-writing) what is dictated to him by the spirit of communicating.

I am in a normal (not trance) state, but unconscious of the composition.

My hand is moved to write from right to left (backwards), independent of my will.

By holding the written side up to the light, the answer can be read.

The spirit-letters should be SECURELY sealed, addressed to the spirit, giving his or her name in full, and signed by the writer's name in full; but no address on the envelope.

When left open they cannot be answered, my agency being efficient only when my mind is passive, and blank to both questions and answers.

Put your questions clearly, directly, briefly. The mixed and many kinds defeat the object of the investigator.

I have my photograph for sale, exhibiting my Spirit Guide's hand and arm, or form of control; taken while answering a sealed letter."

[The terms here follow, with honorable notification that the money is returned in all cases when the letters are not answered.]

It will be noted that this Medium's 'Spirit-guide' requires the names in full of both Spirit and writer; I was, therefore, forced to select a Spirit who knew not only me and my ways, but also the high value that is placed on that skull. Mindful that eminent Spiritual authority had pronounced this skull to be that of a colored woman, I decided, after deliberation, to address the Spirit of W—— H——, a colored servant, who had lived over forty years in one family a faithful, blameless life, and who, when he died, carried with him the respect and regards of the entire household, and whose widow and daughters still survive in honest, humble life, and to whose ears this apparent freedom with their husband's and father's name will never reach. Accordingly, the following note was addressed to the Spirit world:

'Dear W—— H——. Can you tell me anything about the owner, when alive, of the skull here in the Library? You remember how anxious I have always been to have my ignorance on this score enlightened. Have you any message to send to your wife, M—— F——? Are you happy now? Your old friend, Horace Howard Furness.'

This letter was put in an envelope, which was gummed and sealed with five simple seals, without the impenetrable stitches of silk, and enclosed with the fee to Mr. Flint. It was received again in a few days with this note:—'Dear Sir—I gave your sealed Spirit-letter three sittings and regret to state that I have been unable to get an answer. My Guide at each sitting wrote and said, the Spirit called upon is not present to dictate an answer.' The fee was also returned.

An examination of the envelope by cutting at the edges, as in the previous experiment, showed that the 'Spirit arm' of the Guide of Mr. Flint had not the nerve of Dr. Mansfield. I was at a loss to know why it stopped; it was going along in the removal of the seals very nicely; to be sure the paper was tearing perilously near where the rent could be detected from the outside, but with only a little more of Dr. Mansfield's pluck, and the Spirit of W—— H—— would have been present, and the fee pocketed. However, from whatever cause, whether fright or repentance, the 'flighty purpose was o'ertook,' and the Medium supposed that a little mucilage would 'clear him of the deed.'

Next I turned to Mrs. Eleanor Martin, in Columbus, Ohio. Without writing a fresh letter, I sent her the same letter to W—— H——,

which had been returned to me from Mr. Flint, and the envelope was sealed in the simple easy way with five seals, but no silk stitches.

To this came the following response:

'Columbus, Ohio, March 25th, '85.

* * * Please find enclosed your sealed letter, also the messages, and my terms. I learn from the messages, your letter was written upon the Spiritual topic. My terms being $1.00. But in your case I find the messages are at a greater length than many and according to request of the Spirit "Belle" I paint the little white rose as her nature. Most truly, Eleanor Martin.

First message, written by one of my Guides in Spirit for the following persons:

MESSAGE.

In earth life I was tall and fair
With jet black eyes and golden hair
Eyes that sparkled with mirth and song
And whose hair in curls one yard long.

Ah but many sad years ago
My life was burdened with woe
But the seens [*sic*] through which I passed
Are now with gladness overcast.

I was born in your earth to await
The coming of a cruel fate
Yes, I a true and loving wife
But mine was a sad darkened life.

Oh a life which seemed to last
To me the future, as the past,
And as the lone hours drifted by
My only prayer, Oh could I die.

Cruel is the assassins hand
Yet so many are in your land
Day by day as a fearful flood
Hearts have flowed in tears of blood.

My own the pain, I could not tell
But I can say I know full well
My soul ne'er found sweet peace one day
And with earth I could no longer stay.

My form was sold to doctors three
So you have all that's left of me
I come to greet you in white mull
You that prizes my lonely skull.

I can cause you many bright hours
Strew your path in purest flowers
For your kindness tendered me
I will *always* guard and guide thee.

You may call me your Sister Belle
My other name I ne'er can tell
They tell me it is for the best
To let earth's troubles be at rest.

Tis *I* who have often raped [*sic*]
In your quiet room have taped [*sic*]
And have impressed on your mind
Many inquiries of me so kind.

By Blind Harry for a beautiful lady who gives the name Belle.

SECOND MESSAGE.

To my Dear friend Horace

Horace you wonder if all is well
Yes, I'm more happy than I can tell
For sorrow and trouble does not last
But like a sweet dream goes gliding past
In a smooth path of eternal day
Where dawns for each a perpetual May.

Dear M—— tell her, and family too
That I am ever to them most true
And I daily guide her tender feet
Where'er she goes upon the street
That she has my love forever more
I understand her more than before.

Oh! yes this bright and eternal space
Fills each true soul with love and grace
There is nothing like earth's crimes so vile
No frown wreathes the face but a sweet smile
And which glides along, to one and all
Greeting old, and young, gay, and small.

The bright spirit world is everywhere
And to each is appointed some care
To guide earth's children on their way
Amid the poor, as well as the gay
We dwell in fields of labor and love
Guiding thousands in true relms [*sic*] above.

Many things I would love to rehearse
  Which would be written for me in verse
But so many are here to await
  Their joyous messages to relate
Many friends with me are ever near
  To guide our brother Horace dear.—

By Blind Harry.

For a gentleman who gives his name W—— H——.'

The sealed envelope scarcely needed to be opened at the back for interior inspection; its exterior bore ample and all-sufficing evidence that the seals had been broken, and the gum softened; the fingers which had again pressed down the gummed edge were not as unsullied as 'Sister Belle's' white rose.

This communication from the Spirit world gave me pause. Here was food for reflection. It settled many points in dispute among the scientific Ghosts. First: they were all right on the question of sex; but Hare, Combe and Cornelia Winnie were wrong as to color. Sister Belle is not a negress, her hair is not black and in kinks, it is golden, and its curls are three feet in length, moreover, a *white* rose is her emblem. And what a sad domestic tragedy have I not here unearthed. In reading between the lines of these verses we learn that what darkened the life of this true and loving woman was a mercenary husband, and that this husband survived her, and in his unhallowed greed sold her body, and this, too, at so exorbitant a price, that it required the united purses of three doctors to induce him to close the bargain.

Secondly: by the message from W—— H——, that most sedate and respectful of all respectful colored servants, the moralist may learn anew the truth that Death is a leveller of all distinctions. Not even when the Emperor Charlemagne appeared at a Materializing Séance in a dress-coat and standing collar, and apologetically remarked that 'Kings leave their ermine, sir, at the door of the tomb,' not even then was this great truth driven so profoundly home as when W—— H—— greeted me by my Christian name, and hailed me 'brother.'

Need it be added that I gratefully remitted to Medium Number Three a double fee, and do yet consider myself many times her debtor? Her gratitude to me found expression in another outburst of song.

Had the identity of the original owner of the skull been my sole object, I might well have rested content. I had found the owner, and she had claimed her own. She was 'Sister Belle,' and confessed to

that rare combination of golden hair with black eyes, like Lady Penelope Rich, Sir Philip Sydney's first love. But my duty as a member of this Commission compelled me to complete my investigations, and make application to the fourth and last Medium for answering Sealed Letters.

As I have stated, this Medium is also a woman, and resides in Massachusetts. Her circular directs the sealed letters to be 'well sealed or stitched, so that they may not be opened until returned.'

To this Medium, Mrs. Eliza A. Martin, Oxford, Mass., was sent the same letter to W—— H—— that had been sent to her predecessor, of the same name, in Columbus, and it was put in an envelope, merely gummed and sealed, without the silk stitches.

Within a few days I received the following note, enclosing my sealed envelope: 'A message awaits your order from W—— H——. Please state if you recognize Mrs. M. F. H.—Several friends came and that name was mentioned. * * * There are some words in an unknown tongue.'

The minute that I looked at the returned envelope, I felt like standing uncovered, as in the presence of genius, a genius before which Mediums One, Two and Three paled. Nothing could excel the unsullied virginity of the seals, or of the gummed spaces between them. I felt that I must proceed with the utmost caution. With a very sharp penknife I then began to cut the edge of the envelope at one end. Scarcely had the knife been drawn very slowly more than the half of an inch before it became manifest that the edge of the envelope presented more resistance than the simple fold of paper would make. I stopped and examined the severed edges. Very delicate but very distinct traces were visible of a thin mucilage, perhaps of rice-water or of diluted gum-tragacanth. How exquisite and how light are the touches of ethereal, Spiritual fingers! After all the trouble with my seals, when, emulating Dr. Watt's *Busy Bee*, 'so neat I spread my wax,' it was beginning to dawn upon me that clairvoyant eyes, quite as much as our own, require Heaven's broad sunshine on black ink and white paper.

The transmission of the fee brought in a few days the following:

'Dictated by the Spirit of W—— H——.

To H. H. Furness. I found things very different here from what I expected. I think that is almost the universal experience. The half has not been told, nor can it ever be, for no language known to humanity can convey any definite knowledge of the mysteries of the Spiritual Life.

I remain the same toward you and all my earthly friends. Am with you frequently. Was present in your Library with you one day recently. I send my love to M—— F—— and to all others who knew me in earth-life.

A friend whom we both know and respect will pass over to this side before long.

Will come to you again.'

I cannot but think that all will agree in estimating this communication, with its adroit generalization, and in its general tone as superior to any thus far received. On another sheet of paper was written:

'There is a Spirit Friend present, who gives the name of Marie St. Clair. Earth-life had not much pleasure for her, and a course of dissapation [*sic*] and sin resulted in an untimely death. Born of French parentage, and inheriting some of the peculiar characteristics of that people might perhaps furnish some excuse. This Spirit says furthermore, you have something which once belonged to her in your possession.

"Behold this ruin, 'tis a skull
Once of etherial spirit full—"
"Par quel ordre du Ciel, que je ne puis compendre
Vous dis-je plus que je ne dois?"

Here is evidently 'a spirit of no common rate,' of whom we might well desire further acquaintance, albeit at the cost of losing golden-haired, black-eyed Sister Belle. But why should we talk of 'loss?' If, as Banquo says, 'there's husbandry in Heaven,' why should we not in the 'Summer-land' find one and the same skull, with frugal economy, given to two owners?

Desirous of submitting the mother-wit of this Medium to the test of stitched envelopes, I wrote the following:—'Is Marie St. Clair pleased in having her skull carefully treasured here in my Library? Does it gratify her, as a Spirit, that it is mounted on black marble? Does she ever hover over it?'

This was placed in an envelope, gummed, and sealed with five seals in the ordinary, easy-going way, and marked No. 1.

The very same questions were repeated on another piece of paper and put in an envelope, which was stitched securely with silk, the stitches passing through both the envelope and the paper, and carefully concealed under the sealing wax. This was marked No. 2, and in the note accompanying these two envelopes, the Medium was requested to

sit with No. 1 first. The Test was the same as that to which Dr. Mansfield had been subjected, and to which he had succumbed.

The mail soon returned both envelopes, with this note:—'The reply comes to us in the affirmative to both envelopes. There is quite a communication for you from same Spirit Friend.'

A close examination of the edges of the envelopes soon revealed the edge at which they had been opened and closed again. That edge has been preserved intact for future verification, if required, and the envelopes were opened by cutting the other edges. The seals had not been removed; as, in fact, there was no need of removing them. The paper containing the questions had not been extracted from No. 2; it still remained firmly stitched to the front of the envelope. Yet the Medium had evidently read it. Her words are 'the reply comes in the affirmative to both envelopes,' which is a good, fair answer. I was puzzled, it must be confessed. Suddenly it occurred to me to try how far one could look into the contents of the paper, supposing the end of the envelope to be open. I tried it, and lo! enough can be easily read to make out that No. 2 is a repetition of No. 1. The needle had missed taking up all the folds of the paper!

The communication from Marie St. Clair, which accompanied these envelopes, runs thus:—'To H. H. Furness. Your kindly nature has often drawn the Spirit of Marie to your side. I consider myself indebted to you for certain acts which you will understand. Not that the poor inanimate thing which you have so kindly treated, is of itself of much account, but your kindness has often drawn me to your side in moments when you little dreamed I were near. Had I met in material existence one like yourself my past might have been far different. In this beautiful life, the sources and courses of all earthly misfortunes and sins appear to us like a figure seen in a dream. The lowest plane of Spiritual life is as much superior to earthly existence as sunlight is superior to starlight. From Marie St. Clair. Please inform Mrs. Martin why you so carefully preserved the skull, and where you obtained it, and all you know about it, and oblige yours truly, E. A. Martin. There is an acrostic upon your name waiting for you here from Marie.'

If the fair and frail Marie appears somewhat cautious in direct allusions to her skull, and to her 'earth-life,' it is certainly to her credit that she seems to have retained no taint of mercenary greed. She made no demand or reference to a fee, and a second letter had to be sent to her Medium to learn the amount of my debt. This is her reply:—'Your kind favour came duly to me, and as your message

to your Spirit Friend was delivered previously, that is, as soon as it was written, I had no further effort to make than to convey the following to you:

'Amants, heureux amants, voulez-vous voyager! Que ce soit aux rives prochaines.

Patience, je n'en ai pas quand je suis si près et si loin de vous.

Ah! tout ce qu'il y a dans le cœur de crainte, de douleur, de desespoir, j'ai tout deviné; tout souffert, je puis tout exprimer maintenant surtout la joie. Adieu! Marie St. Clair.'

Here end my investigations into the power of Spirits to answer sealed questions.

In every instance the envelopes had been opened and reclosed; it is therefore scarcely necessary to add that every instance has borne the stamp of Fraud.

There is yet one other dark chapter, perhaps the darkest of all, which my duty compelled me to read.

I began with Dr. Mansfield, in Boston; let me end with him there.

In addition to the answering of sealed letters sent to him by mail, this Medium exercises his Mediumistic powers on questions propounded to him, or rather to the Spirits through him, at his own home.

His method of work, as described by several highly intelligent observers, is somewhat as follows:—There are two tables in the room of séance, at one of which sits the Medium, at the other the visitor. The visitor at his table writes his question in pencil at the top of a long slip of paper, and, after folding over several times the portion of the slip on which his question is written, gums it down with mucilage and hands it to the Medium, who thereupon places on the folded and gummed portion his left hand, and in a few minutes with his right hand writes down answers to the concealed questions; these answers are marvels of pertinency, and prove beyond a cavil the Clairvoyant or Spiritual powers of the Medium. So remarkable are the results of this phase of Mediumship, that through them and through the high standing and intelligence of those who believe in him, this particular Medium is a tower of Spiritualistic strength. Examine my informants as narrowly as possible, there appeared to be no possibility of fraud. The impression had gradually deepened in my mind that here is an instance of genuine Spiritual power. But the fraudulent character of his dealings with the sealed letters made me fear that *falsus in uno, falsus in omnibus.*

On the 14th of May, 1885, I called on Dr. Mansfield at his house, No. 28 Dartmouth Street, and was ushered into the second story front room—a bedroom. There were, I think, three front windows looking on the street; at the farthest was the Medium's table, so placed sideways to the window, and close to it, that the full light fell on the Medium's left hand, as he sat at it, and faced the middle of the room. In front of the Medium, as he sat at the table with his back to the wall, were the usual writing materials, lead pencils and mucilage bottle, and beyond them, on the edge of the table farthest from the Medium, and between him and the rest of the room, was a row of books, octavos, etc., extending the whole length of the table and terminating in a tin box, like a deed box, with pamphlets on it. When the Medium sits at his table, this row of books is between him and his visitor. The table for the visitor is a small one, near one of the other windows and six or seven feet from the Medium. On this table were a number of strips of paper and a pencil.

The Medium, who did not ask my name, bade me take a seat at the small table and write my question on one of the strips of paper, and then to fold down the paper two or three times.

I sat down and wrote, "Has Marie St. Clair met Sister Belle in the other world?" I then folded that portion of the strip of paper down three times, and told the Medium that it was ready for the mucilage; he came over from his table at once with a brush of mucilage, and spread it abundantly under the last fold. Then, taking the strip between his thumb and forefinger, he walked with it back to his table, keeping it in my sight all the time. As soon as he took his seat and laid the strip on his table before him, I rose and approached his table, so as to keep my paper still in sight; *the row of books entirely intercepted my view of it.* The Medium instantly motioned to me to return to my seat, and, I think, told me to do so. I obeyed, and as I did so could not repress a profound sigh. Why had no one ever told me of that row of books? The Medium did not sit in statue-like repose, but moved his body much, and his arms frequently; his hands I could not see, hidden as they were, behind the row of books. After a minute or two the Medium looked up and said, 'I don't know whether I can get any communication from this Spirit,' a remark which a long experience with Slate-Writing Mediums has taught me to regard as a highly favorable omen, and as an indication that they have read the question and are now about to begin the little game, in which I always take much interest, of experiencing great difficulty in obtaining the 'rapport,' as they term it. Dr. Mansfield frowned, shook his head and as-

sumed an air of great doubt and perplexity. I was certain that there would be now an ostentatious display of the strip of paper, and sure enough, in a minute more the Medium, strip in hand, came over to my table, and shook his head ominously. He placed his left hand on the portion of the strip containing my question, and began tapping on it with his forefinger. 'Pray, tell me,' I said, 'is that motion of your forefinger voluntary or involuntary?' 'It's my telegraph to 'em,' he replied, 'getting 'em to come.' 'I don't want to weary you,' I rejoined, 'but if that tapping will bring them, *do* keep it up! I cannot tell you how anxious I am to hear from this Spirit.' He paused, and then made some marks, like cabalistic signs, which are still to be seen on the paper. Then the tapping was resumed. Then more cabalistic signs were made. At last he said, 'Put your left foot against mine, and your left knee against mine, and hook your forefinger into mine, and pull hard.' I did so. 'Stop,' he cried, 'is it Maria?' 'Yes,' I replied, 'that's it, she is called 'Marie.' It's Marie!' 'I have to go by the sound,' he rejoined. We then pulled forefingers again. 'Stop,' he cried, 'is there a 'Saint' about it?' 'Yes,' I answered, 'St. is the first part of the next name! I have so longed to have her come to me.' Dr. Mansfield arose, gathered up the strip and returned to his table. I could go now unopposed and stand by him while he wrote the following: 'I am with you my dear Bro but too xcited to speak for a moment have patience brother and I will do the best I can do to control. Your sister Marie St. Clair.'

The change in kinship, and its novelty, staggered me somewhat; clearly they manage things differently in the 'Summer-land.' However, I mastered my emotion. 'And now,' I said, 'for the great question,' and was going hastily to my table to write it. 'Stop,' said the Medium, 'you're too excited to ask that question now. Put some other questions first. Then when you are calmer put the important question.' (A clever stroke! He did not know enough of me or of Marie to answer *anything* definitely—a few intermediate questions might furnish him with many a clue.) 'But, my dear sir,' I cried, 'what *can* I ask about? I have but one thought in my mind; *that* engulfs all others. If I don't ask that, I shall have to ask Marie if she minds this pouring rain, or some twaddle about the weather.' 'Well, well, you'd better ask it then, and get it off your mind, and we'll see how far Marie can answer it.' (Here let me recall that stanza in Sister Belle's communication wherein she says:

"My form was sold to doctors three
And you have all that's left of me," etc.)

I sat down at my table and wrote: 'Is it really true that Sister Belle's body was sold to three doctors?' I folded it down, carried it to the Medium's table, watched him gum it, and still remained standing at his table, but he immediately and peremptorily waved me to my seat. Again were his hands and my strip of paper, with its *freshly gummed* fold, completely hidden from sight, behind the row of books. Again the Medium's arms moved. He turned to the window and hastily pulled down the shade. This puzzled me. There was no sunshine to be excluded, it was raining fast outside, the day was unusually dark, and he needed all the light he could get. I turned and looked out of my window, and there in the house just across the narrow street, at a window on a level with ours, and commanding a full view of the Medium's table, sat a woman sewing, with another, I think, standing by her. 'Bravo!' I thought, 'are not the four Cardinal virtues, Temperance, Justice, *Prudence* and Fortitude?' and then resumed my watch inside. Dr. Mansfield finished writing, and then held up the slip as though for a final revision before handing it to me. A toothpick which he had in his mouth worked energetically from side to side, and he gravely shook his head as in perplexity. 'I don't like this,' he ejaculated at last, 'I don't want to give it to you. There'll be trouble here. It's very serious. Better let me tear it up.' 'Let me see it,' I cried, 'I promise you I'll be calm,' and I took the strip from his fingers and read:

'Dear Brother—I fear such was the case—but—I could not say who —I have consulted Dr. Hare—and the far famed Benja Rush, and they agree that the body is not in the earth—I fear darling Belle's body—is in process of being—wired. Marie St. Clair.'

The last word was not, I thought, quite legible, so I appealed to the Medium, and when he solemnly said 'wired,' the utterance with which I greeted it he probably thought was a groan, and, indeed, from the borderland of laughter, I did try to push it over into the land of tears, as hard as I could.

My third question immediately followed: "Can you give me any information as to where even a portion of the body is?" Again I was waved to my seat, again my strip of paper and the hands were concealed, again the arms were nervously moved. T[illegible]swer I awaited with not a little anxiety. Surely, surely, Marie St. Clair and Sister Belle would remember that their joint skull was in my library. They had told me so, only a few weeks before, and as that skull was known to be fifty or sixty years old, and their united memory of it had

lasted throughout those long years, surely that memory would not desert them now. And Dr. 'Benja' Rush, who had recently greeted me as 'townsman,' he was present and surely he would come to the rescue of Spiritualism, and gladly seize the chance to settle the question which he had once discussed with Combe, and Gall, and Spurzheim by bringing forward the frail Marie and the golden-haired, black-eyed Belle as tenants in common (and uncommon) of the same skull. Moreover, I thought, are there not to be found in Anatomical Museums skeletons of infants with one body and two heads? Why may not this have been an instance of one head and two bodies? To be sure, one of the bodies lived in Ohio and the other in Massachusetts, but then when we have once started on a journey through the marvels of Spiritualism, as portrayed by these four Mediums, what does such a trifle as this amount to? I had, I reflected, in all seriousness, taken no single step in the investigation of these Mediums that was not fully authorized by the explicit statements received from the Mediums themselves. I had accepted as truth what they told me was truth. If Spiritualism is hereby wounded, it is wounded in the house of its own disciples.

At last my answer came: 'I am not allowed to divulge what *I* think —much less what I know—it would be productive of more harm than good—let them have it—it is but earth at best—they have not got *our* precious Belle—she is safe in the Haven of Eternal repose—*I* would not make any noise about it—but let it pass—as a discovery of it would give you pain rather than otherwise—Belle says let it pass—the *triune* that have it bought it without knowing whose it was, and such care as little as they know.

Marie St. Clair.'

I felt that it was time that a conclusion should be put to this farce, so humiliating in the thought that honest, unsuspicious, gentle men and gentle women are daily deceived by it. Nevertheless, I wished to bring the 'wheel full circle' to this Medium's Spiritual communications of aforetime. I recalled that Cornelia Winnie's spirit had said that she thought the skull was Dina Melish's 'top not.' My fourth, and last, question therefore ran: 'Do you think that by any chance Dina Melish would know?' To which the answer came: "Well Brother, as to that She may know more than She may be willing to divulge —you see, Brother, it places Dinah in a very unpleasant position, *i. e.*, should it be noised abroad that she was in the secret. I do not by any means censure Dinah for what she may know, if *know* she does. You could xamine Dinah on that point—carefully, not allowing

her to suspect your object in so doing. You might and might not elicit some light on the matter.

Marie St. Clair.'

14 May, '85.

After I had handed this last question to Dr. Mansfield a slight incident enabled me, to my own satisfaction, to note the exact instant when he read my question (he would say, 'clairvoyantly') behind his row of books. He once lifted his eyes to mine, and met them full for an instant in a piercing look. I do not think he suspected that I was his former correspondent (I would have told him willingly who I was if he had ever asked me), but the name 'Dina Melish' seemed to come back to his memory, as one that he had heard but could not localize. Of course I knew that he had just read my question.

I told him that these were all the questions I desired to ask him. He exhorted me to be calm, and told me a cheerful story of a young girl's having been recently buried alive, of which, I infer, the moral was, that she would have found it more comfortable all round to have been sold to the doctors. I paid him his fee and left.

In conclusion, let me add that we have by no means exhausted the lessons which Spiritualism, in the hands of some of its votaries, can teach us. To our purblind vision the joint ownership of one skull by two different persons presents a physiological problem more or less difficult of solution. But all difficulty vanishes as soon as 'the river is crossed.' I derived no little comfort and much light from a Materializing Séance which I attended shortly afterwards in Boston, where both Marie St. Clair and Sister Belle appeared together, at the same time, and greeted me with affectionate warmth. To my inexpressible relief they were each well provided with skulls. They were more mature and matronly, I confess, than my ardent fancy had painted them, and Sister Belle's 'golden curls one yard long' were changed to very straight black hair; the golden hue which Sister Belle had herself ascribed to them must have been due to the light in which she saw them, 'the light that never was on sea or land.'

I was pleased to find that Marie's English was excellent, without a trace of foreign accent. But this, and the matronly appearance, I learned subsequently were presumably due to the age, shape and nativity of the Medium through whom she materialized. For when Marie afterwards appeared to me, as she did many times at another Medium's séances, her appearance was quite youthful, with clustering brown curls low down on her forehead, which when I once attempted to stroke

I found to be full of sharp pins; and to my expressions of gratitude that she should so kindly appear to me, she lisped in broken English: 'I am viz you olvays.' The present of an amber necklace, with the name 'Marie' engraved on the silver clasp, obtained for me from her the written expression of her pleasure that I had carefully preserved what I assured her was 'the last thing on her neck before she passed over.' Need I say that this document, in Marie's own handwriting, invests the skull with even added interest?

HORACE HOWARD FURNESS.

MATERIALIZATION.

I think it would be difficult to find a psychological study more interesting than that which is afforded by a Materializing séance. I have never attended one that did not yield abundant food for reflection, and present one problem, at least, too deep for any solution I can devise. Although, perhaps, our first experience in such séances makes the deepest impression, yet the novelty never wears off, nor can custom stale its variety. The audiences are never wholly the same, and every Medium has her own peculiar method.

In the cities where the Mediums reside, and where they hold their séances on regular days throughout the winter, the audiences are by no means composed only of those who go out of idle curiosity; these form but a small segment of the 'circle,' the majority are regular attendants, mostly those whose lives have been clouded by sorrow, and who go thither as to a church or sanctuary, and so serious and earnest is their deportment that I cannot imagine any temptation to open levity. This unaffectedly religious character of these séances cannot fail, I think, to strike even the most indifferent. The careful arrangement of the visitors who are to compose what is termed the 'circle;' the nice balancing of positive natures with negative natures, wherein the Medium is guided by her delicate spiritual insight; the quiet hush; the whispered conversation; the darkened room; the darker drapery of the mysterious Cabinet, with its untold possibilities; the subdued chords of the dim melodeon; the soothing tones of familiar hymns, in which all voices join; the words full of assurance of a deathless life, of immortal love, of reunion with earthly idols, not lost, but gone before only a very little distance, and now present and impatient for the Medium's trance to enable them to return radiant with love and joy—all these conspire to kindle emotions deeply religious in hearts that are breaking under blows of bereavement, and of such, as I have said, the majority of the audiences are composed. Every effort is made by the Mediums to heighten the effect. Before entering the Cabinet to undergo her mysterious trance, the Medium generally makes a short address, reminding the circle that this is a solemn hour, that here is the forecourt of the world beyond, thronged with living Spirits, eager to return, bearing visible, tangible assurance of immortality and of enduring love, and that the mysterious agency, whereby they return,

is greatly aided by a sympathetic harmony in the circle, and so forth. The Medium then enters the Cabinet; the curtains close; the light is lowered; the organ sounds some solemn chords, gliding into the hymn, 'Nearer, my God, to Thee,' which all join in singing. At its close there is a hush of anticipation; and that nature must be unimpressionable indeed, that is not stirred when the dark, heavy folds of the curtains of the Cabinet are discerned to be tremulously moving; and, as they gently part, disclose a figure veiled from head to foot in robes of white.

If the return of the heavenly visitant would but end here, I think the impression would be deeper and more abiding. The filmy, vague outline of the white figure thoroughly harmonizes with all established, orthodox notions of ghosts, and if this were all of the apparition vouchsafed to us, we might, perhaps, have a harder problem to deal with than when the Spirit actually emerges from the Cabinet with outstretched arms of greeting. A substantial, warm, breathing, flesh and blood ghost, whose foot-falls jar the floor, is slightly heterodox and taxes our credulity; if hereunto be added an unmistakable likeness to the Medium in form and feature, many traces, I am afraid, of the supernatural and spiritual vanish.

Mindful of our endeavour as a Commission, to have as many observers as possible in cases demanding close observation, I never attended a Materializing séance as a member of this Commission. Whenever I happened to be personally known (and my ear-trumpet soon makes me a marked man), that official capacity was unavoidably imputed to me, but I never announced it nor claimed it. I was present merely as an observer on my own account, with the intention of making arrangements, if practicable, for séances with the rest of the Commission, if what I saw seemed to me sufficiently remarkable to justify the expense, which experience, with other Mediums in other lines, had taught me would be very considerable. I therefore took no notes, and could at this late day only after much difficulty furnish dates. Wherefore all that I propose in this Memorandum is to give my own private conclusion, which is worth no more than the conclusion of any other private individual, and to mention the test to which I subjected all the Spirits whom I had the pleasure of specially 'interviewing'; as this test can be applied by any one, at any time, at any séance, it partakes of the nature of a general truth, which does not need the support of dates, or names, or places to uphold it. I suppose I have attended between twenty and thirty Materializing séances.

I do not hesitate to acknowledge that I have been throughout sincerely and extremely anxious to become converted to Spiritualism. In whatever direction my judgment is warped, it is warped in favor of that belief. I cannot conceive of the texture of that mind which would not welcome such an indisputable proof of immortality as Spiritualism professes to hold out.

In general, then, let me say at once and emphatically that I have never seen anything which, in the smallest degree, has led me to suppose that a Spirit can be, as it is termed, materialized. It is superfluous to add that I never recognized a materialized Spirit; in only two instances have any Spirits professed to be members of my family, and in one of those two instances, as it happened, that member was alive and in robust health, and in the other a Spirit claimed a fictitious relationship, that of niece.

Of course this assertion applies only to those Spirits who materialized especially for me. I do not pretend to answer for Spirits who came to other people. All that I am quite sure of is that all the Spirits who singled me out from the circle, and emerged from the Cabinet for my benefit, were not only abundantly 'padded round with flesh and fat,' but also failed utterly in any attempt to establish their individuality; and moreover, in the instances where I had seen the Medium before she entered the Cabinet, so closely resembled the Medium as, in my eyes, to be indistinguishable from her.

It is, I confess, a very puzzling problem (it is, in fact, the problem to which I alluded above) to account for the faith, undoubtedly genuine, which Spiritualists have in the personal reappearance of their departed friends. Again and again have I asked those who have returned, from an interview with a Spirit at the Cabinet, to their seats beside me, whether or not they had recognized their friends beyond a peradventure, and have always received an affirmative reply, sometimes strongly affirmative. I was once taken to the Cabinet by a woman and introduced to the Shade of her dead husband. When we resumed our seats, I could not help asking her: 'Are you *sure* you recognized him?' Whereupon she instantly retorted, with much indignation, 'Do you mean to imply that I don't *know* my *husband?*' Again, at another séance, a woman, a visitor, led from the Cabinet to me a Materialized Spirit, whom she introduced to me as 'her daughter, her dear, darling daughter,' while nothing could be clearer to me than the features of the Medium in every line and lineament. Again and again, men have led round the circles the Materialized Spirits of their wives, and introduced them to each visitor in turn; fathers have taken

round their daughters, and I have seen widows sob in the arms of their dead husbands. Testimony, such as this, staggers me. Have I been smitten with color-blindness? Before me, as far as I can detect, stands the very Medium herself, in shape, size, form, and feature true to a line, and yet, one after another, honest men and women at my side, within ten minutes of each other, assert that she is the absolute counterpart of their nearest and dearest friends, nay, that she *is* that friend. It is as incomprehensible to me as the assertion that the heavens are green, and the leaves of the trees deep blue. Can it be that the faculty of observation and comparison is rare, and that our features are really vague and misty to our best friends? Is it that the Medium exercises some mesmeric influence on her visitors, who are thus made to accept the faces which she wills them to see? Or is it, after all, only the dim light and a fresh illustration of *la nuit tous les chats sont gris?* The light, be it remembered, is always dim at these séances, and it is often made especially dim when a Spirit leaves the Cabinet. I think I have never been able at such times to read the Arabic numerals on my watch, which happen to be unusually large and pronounced. Unquestionably Spiritualists will be at no loss to explain this puzzle; possibly they would say that I have here unconsciously given one of the very best of proofs of the reality and genuineness of Materialization, and that my unbelief acts on the sensitive, evanescent features of the Spirit like a chemical reagent, and that—but it is not worth while to weaken by anticipation their solacing arguments.

In any statement of this problem we should bear in mind all the attending circumstances: the darkened room; the music; the singing; the pervading hush of expectation; the intensely concentrated attention; the strained gaze at the dark Cabinet and at its white robed apparitions; and finally, the presence of a number of sympathizing believers.

There is another fact about these séances which I think cannot fail to impress even the most casual observer, and this is the attractive charms which the Cabinet seems to possess for the aboriginal Indian. This child of nature appears to materialize with remarkable facility, and, having apparently doffed his characteristic phlegm in the happy hunting grounds, enters with extreme zest on the lighter gambols which sometimes enliven the sombre monotony of a séance. Almost every Medium keeps an Indian 'brave' in her cohort of Spirits; in fact, there is no Cabinet, howe'er so ill attended, but has some Indian there. It is strange, too, that, as far as I know, departed black men, who might be supposed to be quite as unsophisticated as departed red men, have

hitherto developed no such materializing proclivitics. It is, perhaps, even more strange that while, in my experience, Italian Spirits neither understand nor speak Italian, and French Spirits can neither comprehend nor talk French, and German Spirits remain invincibly dumb in German, it is reserved to Indian 'braves' to be glibly and fluently voluble in the explosive gutturals of their own well-known tongue.

Before a séance begins, a thorough examination of the Cabinet is always tendered, a privilege of which I very seldom avail myself, and hold to be always superfluous, on the following grounds: First, if the Spirits which come out of the Cabinet be genuine, it is of very small moment how they got in, and no possible scrutiny of the material structure of the Cabinet will disclose the process. Secondly, if the Spirits be fraudulent, the Mediums are too quick-witted and ingenious in their methods of introducing confederates into the Cabinet not to conceal all traces of mechanical contrivance far too effectually to be detected in any cursory examination. It is also to be borne in mind that much can be done under cover of the darkness, which is sometimes total for a few minutes before the séance begins, and also that the notes of the melodeon are sufficiently deep and loud to drown not a little rustling. If the Mediums are deceitful I have always felt that in any endeavor to unmask them the odds are heavily in their favor. The methods are manifold whereby confederates may be introduced into the Cabinet: from above, from below, and, enveloped in black stuff, from back parlors, rooms and closets. It is not what goes into the Cabinet which, in my opinion, demands our scrutiny but what comes out of it; it is to the Spirits to which all our tests should be applied, the Cabinet and the Medium are quite secondary. Furthermore, it should be remembered that those who sit nearest to the Cabinet are always staunch friends of the Medium, or known by her to be perfectly safe and harmless.

Not infrequently a Materialized Spirit is seen to subside into the floor between the folds of the curtains at the opening of the Cabinet. This is termed 'de-materialization,' and not a little mystery is ascribed to it. The mystery vanishes when we reflect how easy it is for a lithe and active young woman so to bow down quickly, even to the very ground, as to convey the impression, when her white garments are alone visible against a black background, that she has sunk into the floor. I have at times distinctly felt the faint jar caused by the Medium's falling backward within the dark curtains a little too hastily. At times,

when the Spirit is wholly within the Cabinet, and visible only through the parted folds of the curtain, the semblance of a gradual sinking is obtained by simply uniting slowly the two folds of the black curtain, beginning at the head and gradually closing them down to the feet; the room is generally so dark that the dark curtain is indistinguishable at a little distance, and the effect of slowly falling is admirably conveyed. In one instance, where the Spiritual garments were not white, but particolored (the Spirit was a Scotch girl and wore the tartan), the effect of de-materializing was capitally given by the Spirit's standing just inside the slightly parted curtains, and then allowing the whole outer costume, even to the head-dress, to fall swiftly to the floor. Perhaps the best effect in this line, that I have seen, was on one occasion when a Spirit had retired within the folds of the curtain, but apparently immediately reappeared again at the opening; she had been habited somewhat like a nun with white bands and fillets around the head and face; thus, too, was she clad at her reappearance, but, as I sat quite close to the Cabinet, I perceived that the figure was composed merely of the garments of the former Spirit, and that there was no face at all within the head-gear. I am sure the omission could not have been detected at the distance at which the rest of the circle sat. This snow-white figure was allowed to sink very, very slowly, the dark curtains uniting above it as it gradually sank, until only the oval white head-dress around what should have been a face rested for a few seconds on the very floor, and then suddenly collapsed. It was in the highest degree ingeniously devised and artistically executed.

There are also various styles of appearing as well as of disappearing. I think the very best and most effective of them all is where a Spirit gradually materializes before our very eyes, outside of the Cabinet, far enough, indeed, outside to give the appearance to a visitor directly in front of rising up from the very centre of the room. A minute spot of white, no larger than a dollar, is first noticed on the floor; this gradually increases in size, until there is a filmy, gauzy mass which rises fold on fold like a fountain, and then, when it is about a foot and a-half high, out of it rises a Spirit to her full height, and either swiftly glides to greet a loved one in the circle, or as swiftly retires to the Cabinet. It is really beautiful, and its charm is not diminished by a knowledge of the simplicity of the process, which, as I have sat more than once when the Cabinet was almost in profile, I soon detected. The room is very dark, the outline of the black muslin Cabinet can only with difficulty be distinguished even to one sitting within six feet of it; a fold of black cloth, perhaps five feet long and four feet wide, is

thrown from the Cabinet forward into the room, one end is held within the Cabinet at about two or three feet above the floor, and from under the extreme opposite edge, where it rests on the floor, some white tulle is slowly protruded, a very little at first, but gradually more and more is thrust out, until there is enough there to permit the Spirit, who has crept out from the Cabinet under the black cloth and has been busy pushing out the white tulle, to get her head and shoulders well within the mass, when she rises swiftly and gracefully, and the dark cloth is drawn back into the Cabinet. I always want to applaud it; it is charming.

On one occasion, a Spirit tried this pretty mode of materialization, not directly in front of the Cabinet, but at the side quite close to where I sat. The Cabinet was merely a frame to which were attached black muslin or cloth curtains, and a Spirit can emerge at the side quite as conveniently as in front. Unfortunately this time, through some heedlessness, the Spirit did not creep out of the frame-work with sufficient care, and some portion of her garments must have caught when she was only on her knees. I never shall forget the half-comic, half-appealing, feminine glance as her eyes looked up into mine, when she was only partially materialized and some plaguey nail had caught her angel robe. It was very hard not to spring to her assistance; but such gallantry would have been excessively ill-timed, so I was forced to sit still while the poor *animula, vagula, blandula,* worked herself free and arose unfettered by my side.

Perhaps this is as fitting a place as any to mention the test whereby I have tried the Spirits who have come to me.

As this same lovely Spirit arose and looked graciously down on me and held out her hands in welcome, I arose also to my feet, and peering anxiously into her face, asked, 'Is this Olivia?' 'Yes,' she softly murmured in reply. Then ensued the following conversation which I reproduce as faithfully as I can. It was broken off once by the Spirit's retiring into the Cabinet, but resumed when she again appeared to me.

'Ah, Olive dear, how lovely of you to materialize! Did you really want to come back?' 'Very much, of course,' she answered. 'And do you remember the sweet years of old?' 'All of them,' she whispered. 'Do you remember,' I continued, 'the old oak near Sumner-place?' [A happy hit, in the longitude of Boston!] 'Yes, indeed, I do,' was the low reply, as her head fell gently on my shoulder. 'And do you remember, Olive dear, whose names were carved on it?' Yes; ah, yes!' 'Oh, Olive, there's one thing I want so much to ask you about. Tell me,

dear, if I speak of anything you don't remember. What was the matter with you that afternoon, one summer, when your father rode his hunter to the town, and Albert followed after upon his; and then your mother trundled to the gate behind the dappled grays. Do you remember it. dear?' 'Perfectly.' 'Well, don't you remember, nothing seemed to please you that afternoon, you left the novel all uncut upon the rose-wood shelf, you left your new piano shut, something seemed to worry you. Do you remember it, dear one?' 'All of it, yes, yes.' 'Then you came singing down to that old oak, and kissed the place where I had carved our names with many vows. Tell me, you little witch, who were you thinking of all that time?' 'All the while of you,' she sighed. 'And do you, oh, do you remember that you fell asleep under the oak, and that a little acorn fell into your bosom and you tossed it out in a pet? Ah, Olive dear, I found that acorn, and kissed it twice, and kissed it thrice for thee! And do you know that it has grown into a fine young oak?' 'I know it,' she answered softly and sadly, 'I often go to it!' This was almost too much for me, and as my memory, on the spur of the moment, of Tennyson's *Talking Oak* was growing misty, I was afraid the interview might become embarrassing for lack of reminiscences, so I said, 'Dearest Olivia, that is so lovely of you. There, be a good girl, good-bye now. You'll surely come and see me again the next time I come here, won't you?" 'Yes, indeed, I will.' I released my arm from encircling a very human waist, and Olive lifted her head from my shoulder, where she had been speaking close to my ear, and de-materialized.

Marie St. Clair, who, on Spiritual authority as I have shown above, shares the ownership with Sister Belle of 'Yorick's' skull in my possession, has never failed to assent whenever I ask a Spirit if it be she. To be sure, she varies with every different Medium, but that is only one of her piquant little ways, which I early learned to overlook and at last grew to like. She is both short and tall, lean and plump, with straight hair and with curls, young and middle-aged, so that now it affords me real pleasure to meet a new variety of her; but in all her varieties she never fails to express her delight over my guarding with care that which was 'the last thing on her neck before she passed over.' I was extremely anxious to obtain a written acknowledgment of this pleasure from Marie, and accordingly I took with me to one of the séances a little trinket, and told the Spirit that I would give it to her if she would just write down for me a few words expressive of this pleasure, and, as she was disappearing into the Cabinet, I thrust a writing-tablet and a pencil into her hand. Before the séance closed, she

reappeared to me, and handing me a paper claimed my promise. In full faith I gave her the little breast-pin, and after the séance, to my chagrin, I found the writing on the paper was not from her, but a message from my 'father,' announcing that he had 'found the next life a great truth,' which was, certainly, cheering, in view of the fact that he was enjoying the present in so remarkably hearty and healthy a manner.

For the next séance I provided an amber necklace, on whose clasp I had 'Marie' engraved, and when the Spirit of the fair French girl appeared, I taxed her with her naughty, deceitful ways, and told her that I would not give her the necklace, which I had brought for her, until she gave me what I asked for, in her own writing. In a very few minutes she reappeared and handed me a paper, whereon she had written: 'I am so glad you have kept them so nicely, Your Marie.' (As her skull was shared by Sister Belle, I suppose Marie was strictly logical, if ungrammatical, in referring to it as 'them.') It was enough; in a few minutes after, Marie reappeared wearing the amber beads glistening round her neck.

No sooner had I given the necklace than occurred another illustration of the remarkable and amiable pliancy with which Materialized Spirits will answer to any name with which they are addressed. The Medium who conducted the séance came to me and said, 'There's a Spirit in the Cabinet who says she's your niece.' Very thoughtlessly I replied, 'But I haven't any niece in the Spirit world.' The instant after I had spoken, I felt my mistake. You must never repel any Spirit that comes to you. It throws a coolness over your whole intercourse with that particular Spirit-band; no Spirit from it will be likely to come to you again. No surface of madrepores is more sensitive to a touch than a Cabinet full of Spirits to a chilling syllable of failure. To regain my lost position, therefore, I said hastily, 'But can it be Effie?' (It was a mere hap-hazard name; I know no 'Effie.') The Medium went to the Cabinet and returned with the answer, 'She says she's Effie, and she wants to see you.' Of course, I went with alacrity to where the curtains of the Cabinet stood open, and there, just within it, saw a Spirit whom I recognized as having appeared once before during the evening with Marie, when the latter had materialized as a sailor-boy, and the two had danced a Spiritualist horn-pipe to the tune of 'A Life on the Ocean Wave.' 'Oh, Effie dear,' I said, 'is that you?' 'Yes, dear Uncle, I wanted so much to see you.' 'Forgive me, dear,' I pleaded, 'for having forgotten you.' 'Certainly I will, dear Uncle, and won't you bring me a necklace, too?' 'Certainly, dear,' I replied, 'when I come here again.' I have never been there since.

Thus is illustrated what will be, I think, the experience of every one who cares to apply this test to Materialized Spirits. When the investigator is unknown to the Medium, a Spirit materialized through that Medium will confess to any name in the heavens above or the earth beneath, in the world of fiction or the world of reality. Of course, it would not do to ask a Spirit whether or not it were some well-known public, or equally well-known fictitious, character. You would be repelled if you should ask a Spirit if it were 'Yankee Doodle,' but I am by no means sure that it would not confess to being 'Cap'en Good'in,' who accompanied Yankee Doodle and his father on their trip to town, and whose name is less familiar in men's mouths. All the good, earnest, simple-hearted folk who attend these séances ask the Spirits, when they appear to them for the first time, if they are father, mother, brother, husband, wife, or sister, and the Spirit will in every case confess the kinship asked for. But, as I have just said, the investigator need not restrict himself to his family, his friends, or his acquaintances. Let him enter the world of fiction, or of poetry, or of history, he has but to call for whomsoever he will, and the Materialized Spirit will answer: 'Lo! here am I!'

Let me strengthen this with the following additional illustration:

Not long ago at a Materializing séance where I was, I think, unknown to everyone, certainly to the Medium, a Spirit emerged from the Cabinet, clad in flowing white robes, and advanced towards me with a wavering gait, which could be readily converted into a tottering walk, if I should perchance ask if it were my great-grandmother, or could be interpreted as the feeble incertitude of a first materialization, if I should perchance descend the family tree and ask for a more youthful scion. I arose as it approached and asked: 'Is this Rosamund?' 'Yes!' replied the Spirit, still wobbling a little, and in doubt whether to assume the rôle of youth or of old age. 'What! Fair Rosamund!' I exclaimed, throwing into my voice all the joy and buoyancy I could master. The hint to the Spirit was enough. All trace of senility vanished, and with equal joyousness she responded 'Yes, it's indeed Rosamund!' Then I went on, 'Dearest Rosamund, there's something I want so much to ask you Do you remember who gave you that bowl just before you died?' Here Fair Rosamund nodded her head gaily and pointed her finger at me. 'Oh, no, no, no,' I said, 'you forget, Fair Rosamund, I wasn't there then. It was at Woodstock.' 'Oh, yes, yes,' she hastily rejoined, 'so it was; it was at Woodstock.' 'And it was Eleanor who offered you that bowl.' 'To be sure, I remember it now perfectly. It was Eleanor.' 'But Rosa-

mund, Fair Rosamund, what made you drink that bowl? Had you no suspicions?' 'No, I had no suspicions.' And here she shook her head very sadly. 'Didn't you see what Eleanor had in her other hand?' 'No.' 'Ah, Fair Rosamund, I'm afraid she was a bad lot.' 'Indeed she was!' (with great emphasis). 'What cruel eyes she had!' 'Hadn't she, though!' 'How did she find you out?' 'I haven't an idea.' 'Ah, Fair Rosamund, do you remember how beautiful you were [here the Spirit simpered a little] after you were dead, and how the people came from far and near to look at you?' 'Yes,' said Fair Rosamund, 'I looked down on them all the while.' And here she glided back into the Cabinet.

It is not impossible that a Spiritualist might urge that the test which I apply is not a fair one—that guile will beget guile, that the Spirits meet me as I meet them.

But what other possible way have I of finding out who the Spirits are, when they do not tell me in advance, but by asking them? Whenever they have been announced to me as this or that Spirit, I invariably treat them as the Spirits of those whom they assert themselves to be, and, in my conclusions, am guided only by the pertinency of their answers to my questions. Whenever William Shakespeare appears to me (and, by the way, let me here parenthetically note, as throwing light on a vexed question, that Shakespeare in the Spirit-world 'favors' the Chandos Portrait, even to the two little white collar strings hanging down in front; his Spirit has visited me several times, and such was his garb when I saw him most distinctly); when, I repeat, Shakespeare materializes in the Cabinet for me, do I not always most reverently salute him, and does he not graciously nod to me—until I venture most humbly to ask him what the misprint, 'Vllorxa' in *Timon of Athens* stands for, when he always slams the curtains in my face? (I meekly own that perhaps he is justified.) Have I ever failed in respectful homage to General Washington? Did I ever evince the slightest mistrust of Indian 'braves?'

When a Spirit comes out of the Cabinet especially to me, how am I to know, or to find out, who it is but by asking? If it be not the Spirit that I name, will it not, if it has a shred of honesty, set me right? What hinders it from telling me just who it is? If it be the Spirit of my great-grandmother, it can be surely no satisfaction to her, after all the bother of materialization, to hold converse with me as the Spirit of Sally in our Alley; and if she be, in every sense of the word, a 'spirity' old lady, she will instantly undeceive me, and 'let me know who I am talking to.' But why should I antici-

pate deceit at Spiritual hands? If William Shakespeare can appear to me, why not Fair Rosamund? Hereupon a Spiritualist may maintain that if the Spirit said she was Fair Rosamund, and displayed a familiarity with the incidents of that frail woman's life and death, she probably was Fair Rosamund. So be it. I yield, and will go farther, and hereafter find no more difficulty, than in her case, in Tennyson's Olivia, Marie St. Clair, and in the heroes and heroines of Scheherezade's Thousand and One Nights.

Although I have been thus thwarted at every turn in my investigations of Spiritualism, and found fraud where I had looked for honesty, and emptiness where I had hoped for fulness, I cannot think it right to pass a verdict, universal in its application, where far less than the universe of Spiritualism has been observed. My field of examination has been limited. There is an outlying region claimed by Spiritualists which I have not touched, and into which I would gladly enter, were there any prospect that I should meet with more success. I am too deeply imbued with the belief that we are such stuff as dreams are made on, to be unwilling to accept a few more shadows in my sleep. Unfortunately, in my experience, Dante's motto must be inscribed over an investigation of Spiritualism, and all hope must be abandoned by those who enter on it.

If the performances which I have witnessed are, after all, in their essence Spiritual, their mode of manifestation certainly places them only on the margin, the very outskirts of that realm of mystery which Spiritualism claims as its own. Spiritualism, pure and undefiled, if it mean anything at all, must be something far better than Slate Writing and Raps. These grosser physical manifestations can be but the mere ooze and scum cast up by the waves on the idle pebble, the waters of a heaven-lit sea, if it exist, must lie far out beyond.

The time is not far distant, I cannot but think, when the more elevated class of Spiritualists will cast loose from all these physical manifestations, which, even if they be proved genuine, are but little removed from Materialism, and eventually Materializing Séances, held on recurrent days, and at fixed hours, will become unknown.

HORACE HOWARD FURNESS.

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